

GLENAVERIL
A POEM

BY THE
EARL OF LYTTON



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1885

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GLENAVERIL;

OR,

THE METAMORPHOSES.

SEP 21 1885
DEPT OF THE INTERIOR

A POEM IN SIX BOOKS.

By THE EARL OF LYTTON, *Edmund Robert*
(OWEN MEREDITH.) *Bulwer-Lytton, 1st earl of*

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1885.

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BOOK THE FIRST.

THE ORPHANS.

CANTO I.—DEATH.

CANTO II.—CHILDHOOD.

CANTO III.—THE WORLD.

CANTO IV.—THE COMPACT.

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SEP 21 1885
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GLENAVERIL;
OR,
THE METAMORPHOSES.

CANTO I.

DEATH.

I.

BORN on the day when Lord Glenaveril died
Was Lord Glenaveril ; and the sire's last sigh,
Breathing a premature farewell, replied
To the son's first petitionary cry.
On that dim tract which doth two worlds divide
And yet unite, they passed each other by
As strangers, tho' each bore the selfsame name ;
The one departing as the other came.

II.

Life and Death darkly jostled in the door
That opes and shuts upon the days of man ;
The sire had lived scarce thirty years before
The sireless son his orphaned life began.
That fragile ark in its small bosom bore
A race which else had perished, tho' its span
Was shorter than a cubit's when one bell
Rang birth and burial, welcome and farewell.

III.

Long ere the child hath left its mother's knee
The web of the man's character is spun ;
Those future paths, no living eye may see,
Ere life's beginning were by Fate begun ;
And all the living do, and all they be,
Proceeds from what the dead have been, or done ;
For Fate hath no finality on earth.
This is the story of Glenaveril's birth :—

IV.

'Twas nigh the ending of the year and day,
And both in sombre golden splendour glowed ;
October prone upon the hillside lay,
Down-drooping, half asleep, his fervid load
Of loosened fruitage ; when along the way,
Full light of heart, a youthful horseman rode
With heedless hand, at rapid pace, not knowing
That Death, by chance, the selfsame way was going.

V.

Youth, in its saucy certitude of joy,
Slights and offends, by noticing it not,
The sadness of that shrouded majesty
Whose unseen power is jealous when forgot.
The Austrian Gessler hung his bonnet high
Upon a pole in some conspicuous spot,
And bade the surly Switzer doff his own,
Passing the symbol of an unseen crown.

VI.

A bidding easily obeyed ! And yet
The rascals all refused to be polite,
Taking the invitation for a threat ;
And that is why, perchance, the Swiss are quite
The most uncivil folks you ever met,
Even to this day. But Gessler's thought was right.
Tyranny's motto (learn it, young aspirant
To freedom !) is *Memento*. Death's a tyrant.

VII.

Remember, and salute him, sons of clay !
Ave, te salutamus Thanatos !
That horseman spied not Death upon his way,
And passed without saluting. Death was cross
To be so slighted by his natural prey,
And shook the rein with a resentful toss.
The steed beheld the spectre, swerved aside,
Rolled down the abyss,—and Death was satisfied.

VIII.

This happened somewhere in a lone retreat
Of the Black Forest, yet not far from where
Fortune erewhile had fixed her favourite seat,
And round her nimble wheel, from here and there,
Her wandering devotees were wont to meet
In Baden Baden's pleasant groves, now bare
Of those gay crowds, those golden oracles,
And Monsieur Benazet's alluring spells.

IX.

Here dwelt a widow, whose late-buried spouse
 (A simple-minded Lutheran village priest)
Had left her with a living pledge of vows
 To love and death twice plighted, unreleased
From ante-natal bondage in that house
 Not made with hands : and in the mother's breast
Grief, like a grave that puts forth blossoms, smiled
Its timorous welcomes to her unborn child.

X.

Three sons the Pastor's wife had borne him—all,
 Before their father, had in childhood died ;
So, from the past, four shadows seemed to fall
 About the empty cradle Fancy tried
To fill with infant features augural
 Of future joys to former hopes denied.
These deaths the dwelling of the widowed wife
Had left too large for her diminished life ;

XI.

But hither, homeward from the hot south, came
 Glenaveril's new-wed Earl, and Countess fair,
The drooping sweetness of whose flowerlike frame,
 That late had languished for its native air,
Here drew from breezes which, if not the same,
 At least were mountain-born, fresh strength to bear
Those mystic agitations that prelude
The burthened bliss of coming motherhood.

XII.

So here Glenaveril was content to stay,
The widow's tenant, till his wife had gained
Health to begin again the homeward way
To their own highlands. Women have retained
Better than men have, the original sway
Of nature's human instincts: unrestrained
By barriers that divide, and ranks that vex,
Theirs is the strong old commonwealth of sex.

XIII.

To Eleanor Glenaveril all the pride,
The joy, the glory, the angelic bode ;
To the lone human sister at her side
Only the care, the suffering, and the load,
Of that in which all women are allied—
The privilege upon their sex bestowed ;
And her heart yearned to solace this poor dame,
Their lot so different yet their case the same.

XIV.

So, when at last in one weak body strove
The powers of birth and death with one another,
'Twas Eleanor's sweet face that stooped above
The fatal childbed of the widowed mother,
And her soft voice that whispered words of love
And hope and courage. Man is not man's brother
As woman woman's sister : her vocation
Begins where ends his aid—with consolation.

XV.

'Sister, embrace thy son!' the lady cried,
And held the infant to the mother's breast;
The dying mother, wanly smiling, eyed
Her little orphan: gratefully she pressed
The hand of Eleanor, and faintly sighed
'Poor babe! 'twill be but an unwelcome guest
'In its dead father's house when I am gone;
'My life is ebbing fast. God's will be done!'

XVI.

'Nay, but,' said Eleanor, 'this child will be
'Half mine, for I have helped it into life;
'But thou must live to do as much for me
'When comes mine hour.' And, as the fond young
wife
Thus to the future issued love's decree,
Love's doom fell sudden as the headsman's knife;
For thro' the hall below, with heavy tread,
Men bore the body of her husband—dead.

XVII.

The famed physician, summoned that same morn
By Eleanor Glenaveril to the aid
Of her poor hostess, found the infant born;
The mother dead; Glenaveril's body laid,
A lifeless horror, in the hall; and torn,
Almost as lifeless, by her weeping maid
From where she had fall'n above it, his young wife,
Plucked by the pangs of labour back to life.

XVIII.

Here the good doctor's skill was not in vain,
For Death's gorged maw had lost its gluttonous zest.
Reluctantly the nurse he brought had ta'en
The child of the dead woman to her breast
With superstitious protest, when again
Glenaveril's heir, another infant guest,
Claimed the unwilling hospitality
Of its hired shelter with a hungry cry.

XIX.

Stoutly the churlish peasant's wife demurred
To this new charge. But that celestial
Patron of infants, good St. Francis, heard
The orphan's cry ; and wakened in the hall
A hubbub shrill. Ere yet another word
The startled nurse could say, his burden small
The doctor thrust into her arms. 'Stay there !'
He cried, and forthwith hastened down the stair.

XX.

A curious figure at the foot of it
His sight surprised ; a woman tall and thin,
On whose hard face time had in wrinkles writ
'Old Maid.' Firm jaws, high cheeks, decisive chin,
Keen nose, and eyes with frank defiance lit,
Guarded a face well fortified within
The deep embrasure of her bonnet vast,
A grim cyclopean relic of the past.

XXI.

‘So, Sir! And who are you? And whose are these
 ‘Believeried pert monkeys? Upon whose
 ‘Authority, whose orders, whose decrees,
 ‘My brother’s widow’s house do they refuse
 ‘To me, Sir, Martha Müller if you please,
 ‘Me who’—‘Alas, good lady, pray excuse
 ‘This sad reception which, if you were not
 ‘Prepared, no doubt’—‘Prepared, Sir! and for what?’

XXII.

‘Did you not know, then, that Frau Müller’—‘Ay,
 ‘My brother’s widow, well?’ ‘Her house had let
 ‘To a young English nobleman’—‘Not I!’—
 ‘Who with a grievous accident has met?’
 ‘But, Sir’—‘His lady lies in jeopardy
 ‘Of own her life’—‘But, Sir’—‘Nay, hear me yet,
 ‘I am my lady’s doctor’—‘That may be,
 ‘Herr Doctor, but all this concerns not me.

XXIII.

‘Which is the way, Sir, to Frau Müller’s room?’
 The doctor seized her arm. ‘Alas,’ he said,
 ‘This house, I told you, is a house of gloom.
 ‘Frau Müller was this morning brought to bed’—
 ‘Ah, and the child?’ ‘A boy.’ ‘Then I presume,
 ‘If she’s asleep’—‘Asleep! take courage’—‘Dead!’
 The woman cried. ‘I understand you now,
 ‘And—thank you, Sir. Forgive—my wits were slow.

XXIV.

‘I thank you. Dead! Poor Mary’ Down upon
 The stair she sat. The doctor turned aside,
 And both were silent for awhile. Anon
 She rose erect, and muttered, as she eyed
 The doctor keenly, ‘And the child? her son,
 ‘My nephew?’ ‘The child lives yet,’ he replied.
 ‘‘Tis well. He lives and *shall* live!’ High she raised
 Her hand, and murmured softly ‘God be praised!’

XXV.

‘Now let me see my nephew. Where is he?’
 ‘Dear Madam, stay awhile. Your nephew is’—
 ‘Be good enough, Sir, not to madam me.
 ‘Thank Heaven, I’m not married!’ ‘Then dear
 Miss—’
 ‘Müller, Sir. Martha Müller, as you see,
 ‘Hearty and hale; and, God be thanked for this,
 ‘A spinster—*Grundbesitzerin*, thank Heaven!
 ‘Residence, Stuttgard—age, Sir, forty-seven’—

XXVI.

‘And therefore, Sir, well able to take care
 ‘Both of herself and nephew. Now, lead on!’
 ‘Wait, my good woman, wait! The little heir
 ‘Of Lord Glenaveril and Frau Müller’s son
 ‘Fate has made foster brothers, and they are
 ‘Both with their nurse now; for I brought but one,
 ‘Not guessing’—‘Keep her!’ interrupted she,
 ‘My nephew’s nurse from Stuttgard came with me.

XXVII.

‘And in the porch outside she waits.’ ‘Indeed!
‘Then,’ said the doctor, ‘You and she were sent
‘By Providence to bless our special need,
‘For with the nurse that’s here I’m ill content.
‘The woman has not wherewithal to feed
‘The two poor orphans this day’s accident
‘Has cast together on her breast; and so
‘By your good help, Miss Müller’—‘Hold, Sir! no.

XXVIII.

‘Neither my nephew, nor his nurse, nor I
‘Can here remain. I keep what I have got,
‘And that is no superfluous supply;
‘A wetnurse, Sir, is not a *table d’hôte*.’
‘Miss Müller,” said the doctor with a sigh,
‘This is unfeeling.’ ‘No, Sir, it is not.
‘In all the world my brother’s child has none
‘Now left to care for him, save me alone.

XXIX.

‘Ho, Gretchen, here!’ And from the porch aglow
Came, coloured like a full-blown cabbage rose,
A peasant wench. ‘This gentleman will show
‘The way upstairs. But first take off thy shoes,
‘Not to disturb the poor sick lady. Go
‘Softly. The woman that hath got them, knows
‘Which child to give thee. Both of them are boys.
‘Follow, and fetch the babe, and make no noise.’

XXX.

While the old nurse was handing to the new
 One half her charge, the doctor heard a sigh
 In the next room ; and, entering softly, drew
 The curtain, and stooped over tenderly.
 The lady oped dim eyes of dreamy blue,
 And vaguely smiled. Then, with a bitter cry
 Remembrance rushed upon its prey, and grief
 In a wild storm of weeping found relief.

XXXI.

'Weep, lady, weep ! Those tears have saved your life ;
 'They are the gift of Heaven,' the doctor said.
 'Is it then true ? all true ?' the wretched wife
 Moaned, 'and no dream ? O God, that I were dead !'
 'My child,' he sighed, 'with pain and suffering rife
 'Are all the paths that human footsteps tread,
 'Yet each is thronged. But who could tread them,
 who
 'Their traveller be, without some end in view ?

XXXII.

'Some by ambition, vanity, or pride
 'Are urged ; and others, other ends allure ;
 'Each follows to the goal a different guide.
 'And is, then, Grief more aimless, or less sure
 'Of *its* vocation ? In your own confide,
 'For it is love's divine investiture ;
 'A precious gift bequeathed you from the grave
 'By him to whom life's dearest joys you gave.'

XXXIII.

Having said this, the doctor rose, and stole
Out of the chamber; but returned anon,
Carrying in his arms a little roll
Of flannel, lace, and linen. 'See your son,'
He whispered, 'and no longer doubt the goal!'
A little sudden cry, a plaintive one,
The babe put forth. The mother flung out wild
Wide arms, and to her bosom clasped her child.

XXXIV.

'Twas then his master-stroke the doctor tried.
And, 'Do you think,' he said, 'you have the force
'To nurse your babe yourself?' The lady cried
'And who but I should nurse him?' Then of course
'This babe,' the good man smiled, 'will be both guide
'And goal. Dear lady, love grants no divorce
'Twixt life and duty, while to life remains
'Aught that upon its love one claim retains.'

XXXV.

He left the babe and mother both asleep,
And waked the nurse. 'Thou good-for-nothing slut,
'Get up, and go!' The nurse began to weep
And whine, 'Twas not my fault,' she whimpered.
'Tut!
'Begone!' 'I could not tell—'tis hard to keep
'One's head in such a place as this—I put
'The cradle yonder, where I thought'—'Enough!
'Thy thoughts are stupid heartless fools. Be off!'

XXXVI.

Then to himself, 'How is all this to end?
 'And how am I to get away from here?
 'If only I knew where to write, or send!
 'I cannot leave her by herself, poor dear,
 'In such a cemetery. Luck befriend
 'My wits, that know not for what port to steer!
 'Oh, for some "Sessame," to ope the door
 'Out of this deadlock! I can do no more.'

XXXVII.

Hap-Hazard, that eccentric humourist,
 The patron of adventures, nose in air,
 Wanders the world where'er his whim may list,
 And, without knocking, enters everywhere.
 No man can either summon or resist
 His intervention: but with prescience rare
 All sorts of complications he scents out,
 Either to solve, or else to bring about.

XXXVIII.

The Saints disown him, nor his name admit
 Into that Heavenly Army List of theirs
 Where, in her Calendar, the Church hath writ
 The names and ranks of all her officers;
 For to no discipline doth he submit;
 But in the conduct of this world's affairs,
 (Tho' to exclude him all its laws were made,)
 His meddling is incessantly displayed.

XXXIX.

Now generous and gracious to excess,
And now morose and cruel, he delights
(Like brigands and marauders, who profess
To rectify Dame Fortune's oversights,
And all her inequalities redress)
In mixing up together wrongs and rights;
The sage he foils, instructs the simpleton,
Wins battles lost, and loses battles won.

XL.

The unconscious crowd his hovering influence guides
To actions by its leaders never meant;
'Tis his incalculable vote decides
The wavering council. Now the innocent
His hand betrays, and now the guilty hides;
Doth here misdeeds provoke, and there prevent;
Admits the lover to the lady's house,
And then informs the unsuspecting spouse.

XLI.

Guessing, no doubt, in that sad hermitage
'Twixt Death and Grief a foremost part to play,
This strolling actor of the world's wide stage
Arrived from Tübingen; whence all the way,
Clad in the garment of a German Sage,
The traveller had walked. Glenaveril's grey
Old valet crossed him on the garden path,
And cried, 'Thank Heaven, Professor Edelrath!'

XLII.

A long lean man, bald, and a little bent,
Was Ludwig Edelrath, with luminous eyes.
Scarce more than forty years his life had spent
In innocently learning to be wise ;
But of his science the serene extent
Embraced those famous forty centuries
That watched Napoleon's conscripts. To his sight
The past was present in a child's delight.

XLIII.

For in this hospitable German mind
Together dwelt ideas old and new.
Those undisturbed disturbers of mankind,
That men and nations, for their prey, pursue,
From Greece, Judæa, Egypt, Rome, and Ind,
Collected here, were all exposed to view
Like wild beasts in a zoologic van,
Without the risk of injury to man.

XLIV.

Homer, Gautama, Moses, Zoroäster
Conversed with him in their own tongue. His brow,
Bald, pale, and pure, seemed modelled by a master
In polished ivory ; and, like the glow
Of veiled lamps lit in urns of alabaster,
Benevolence and wisdom shone below
So soft, that in their light young Love might sigh
' Could I grow old, as he looks so would I ! '

XLV.

He had contrived to reconcile the dead
Even in their deadliest feuds. Without demur,
His heart wore, now the White Rose, now the Red,
On equal terms with York and Lancaster.
Peloponnesian politics he read
As if they were as new as the last stir
Of those innumerable spoons that keep hot
The storm in Modern Europe's social teapot.

XLVI.

Young infants fain would feed on all they see,
With lips still faithful to a mother's breast :
A full-grown child was Edelrath ; and he,
Whose growth his growing tenderness caressed
As growing ivy clasps a growing tree,
So vast an appetite of love possessed
That in his heart he crammed man's world, and man,
As in its mouth a child puts all it can.

XLVII.

Thro' coloured crystal seen, the gloomiest ground
Looks golden ; so to him looked human nature.
Ramses the Great a charming soul he found,
The little Prince of Detmold a grand creature ;
For him even Auguste Comte became profound,
And Victor Hugo modest. Some fine feature
His keen capacity of love detected
In every object on his mind reflected.

XLVIII.

And these discoveries filled him with delight,
Such as Professor Ehrenberg, they say,
Was almost overcome by at the sight
Of his first favourite infusoria.
But what, then, were the links that could unite
This traveller, from the ages rolled away,
And that young widowed mother? 'Tis a tale
That lifts from vanished years another veil.

XLIX.

Returning from his Indian Government
Fired with the love of Hindu literature,
Henry, Lord Orchester, at Bonn had spent
A summer, sipping from the Sanscrit lore
Of the famed Bopp; who to his votary lent
A teacher he himself had trained to store
The scattered wealth of his own aftermath;
His favourite pupil, Ludwig Edelrath.

L.

And Orchester and Edelrath, the lean
Gaunt Student, and the study-loving Peer,
In spite of all disparity between
Their age and station, having passed a year
Together, roaming thro' the rich demesne
Of Hindu Legend, became friends so dear
That more than all his kin, save one, in truth,
The Norman patron loved the Saxon youth.

LI.

That one was his own daughter, the sole child
 And darling solace of his widowed years.
 Full well the little Eleanor was skilled
 In every winning grace that most endears
 Childhood to Age. 'The Saxon youth, beguiled
 From his loved Sanscrit slokas, with hushed ears
 Heard something in his soul begin to stir,
 Murmured 'Sacòntala,'* and worshipped her.

LII.

A difference of age and rank, a face
 Or form too homely to inspire romance,
 In close relations may suffice to place
 A man still youthful, and a girl perchance
 Whose childhood hovers with a lingering grace
 Upon the verge of womanhood. A glance,
 A tone, at any moment might destroy
 This insecure serenity of joy ;

LIII.

And yet it lasts. In all its force profound
 A deep affection, greatening, still remains,
 Like Ocean, faithful to its own vast bound.
 The shallow streamlet, swoll'n by sudden rains,
 O'erflows its narrow banks, and all around
 Submerges in its course the neighbouring plains.
 But the great sea that voice divine obeys
 Which to its storms ' Thus far, no farther,' says.

* "*Nenn' ich Sakontala dich, und so ist alles gesagt.*"—Goethe.

LIV.

And so the years slid quietly away,
And nothing happened to divert or fret
The course of these three lives, until one day
An unexpected change of Cabinet
Recalled Lord Orchester once more to pay
That never-wholly-liquidated debt
Which, ever and anon, from men whose names
Are linked with politics, their Party claims.

LV.

To Public Life Hernani's fatal horn
Belongs: and woe to him who once hath done
To that cursed horn's possessor a good turn!
Past services perchance, but these alone,
The persecutor now and then may scorn
To recollect; but never any one
That's capable of doing service yet
Doth that relentless creditor forget.

LVI.

The fatal horn now startled unawares
The halls of Orchester; and he again,
Obedient to its call, resumed the cares
Of office. Edelrath at Tübingen
Fit refuge found among the learnèd chairs
Of that famed seat of study: and these two men
Assiduous correspondents for awhile,
Absence with friendship strove to reconcile.

LVII.

But visits first, then letters, rarer grew ;
 Until (like folk whose homestead, field and fold,
 Ascending floods have overwhelmed) the two
 As wider and more wide between them rolled
 Life's rapid waves, found fewer and more few
 The points of common interest, that uphold
 A sinking intercourse, still unsubmerged
 In the swift current that between them surged.

LVIII.

And from those peaks and headlands of the past
 They signalled to each other in distress :
 ' It seems a century since I got your last
 ' Long-wished-for letter '—' I must plead the press
 ' Of business under which I write in haste '—
 ' I trust that some time, during the recess,
 ' We may be able '—' I have been unwell '—
 ' Excuse this brief reply. No news to tell '—

LIX.

Et cætera! Was this, then, the decay
 And dissolution of affection? No.
 Out of the corn-seed disinterred to-day
 From Pharaoh's tomb, where centuries ago
 'Twas buried, life hath never passed away ;
 Harvests unreaped lurk in it. Even so,
 Tho' sepulchred in absence, sympathy
 Lives a suspended life and cannot die.

LX.

At length there came to Edelrath, whose three
 Last letters had remained unanswered still,
 From his two friends in England, just when he
 Had half begun to look for tidings ill,
 News of a marriage that was soon to be
 'Twixt Eleanor and Lord Glenaveril.
 He mused 'A fine alliance! But what makes
 'My mind mistrustful of the thoughts it wakes?'

LXI.

'Glenaveril? a noble name, too! why
 'So sinister the sound of it to me?
 'Ah, I remember! Many a year's gone by
 'Since first I found in that strange pedigree
 'Facts that confirmed a theory which I
 'Once played with—and my notebook, let me see,
 'I must have kept it'—Then he searched, and took
 Down from a rummaged shelf a little book :

LXII.

A book of manuscript, in leather bound,
 And labelled thus—'*Glenaveril : curious case*
 '*Of death from violent causes, sometimes found*
 '*Hereditary in a single race.*'
 It was a record that might well confound
 Fate's most inveterate mocker. Red, from place
 To place, from age to age, from man to man,
 The long hereditary bloodstain ran.

LXIII.

Many an old Glenaveril, sire and son,
 Had fall'n in savage clan or border feud :
 Others at Acre or at Ascalon
 Had Painim swords with Christian blood embrued :
 Some in the Stuarts' cause had gaily gone
 To Hanoverian scaffolds : some at lewd
 And brawling feasts when swords, in wine, were
 Had perished for a wager, or a toast. [crossed

LXIV.

One young Glenaveril, in Childe Harold's train,
 Had been at Nauplia the first to fall :
 One upon Waterloo's historic plain
 Had found a soldier's death and burial :
 One had in grim Mahratta war been slain :
 One in a hurdle-race was killed : but all,
 As if the victims of some weird command,
 Had come to violent ends by sea or land.

LXV.

The scholar fell into a reverie.
 Where in this series of untoward events
 Hereditary causes could one see ?
 Yet there the facts were. What are accidents ?
 A causeless accident there cannot be.
 And what excludes transmitted influence
 From such a series ? Character is fate ;
 Men's dispositions do their dooms dictate.

LXVI.

Who dies in battle must to battle go,
Nor are they drowned at sea who stay on shore.
The course of these reflections, in its flow
From one conjecture to another, bore
The wandering fancy of the scholar so
Completely back among the days of yore,
And all the dead Glenaverils, that he quite
Forgot the letter he had meant to write.

LXVII.

Congratulating Lady Eleanor
Upon her live Glenaveril's luckier lot.
But, ere the letter she still waited for,
Came one from her, which he had waited not.
No grim Glenaveril ghost, premonitor
Of coming griefs, had warned his heart of what
This letter told. For she had been a bride
Scarce one short month before her father died.

LXVIII.

Fresh from that father's grave, and scenes made dim
By the dear memory of his good grey hairs,
Glenaveril took his weeping wife with him
To those soft shores where sweet Sorrento rears
From sapphrine deeps her emerald diadem,
And still the Siren's song, thro' scented airs,
Lulls with delightful spells the tideless sea
In whose embrace sleeps blue Parthenope.

LXIX.

The day this letter, by the tears of two
Twice blotted, (his who read, and hers who wrote)
Reached Tübingen, the Sanscrit lecture, due
That morning, a mysterious little note,
Patched to the college lecture board, withdrew.
A learnèd man may from the Vedas quote
The saws of sages and the songs of seers,
But Wisdom never yet stopped Sorrow's tears.

LXX.

There be three hundred different ways and more
Of speaking, but of weeping only one ;
And that one way, the wide world o'er and o'er,
Is known by all, tho' it is taught by none.
No man is master of this ancient lore,
And no man pupil. Every simpleton
Can weep as well as every sage. The man
Does it no better than the infant can.

LXXI.

The first thing all men learn is how to speak,
Yet understand they not each other's speech ;
But tears are neither Latin, nor yet Greek,
Nor prose, nor verse. The language that they teach
Is universal. Cleopatra's cheek
They decked with pearls no richer than from each
Of earth's innumerable mourners fall
Unstudied, yet correctly classical.

LXXII.

Tears are the oldest and the commonest
Of all things upon earth : and yet how new
The tale each time told by them ! how unblessed
Were life's hard way without their heavenly dew !
Joy borrows them from Grief : Faith trembles lest
She lose them : even Hope herself smiles thro'
The rainbow they make round her as they fall :
And Death, that cannot weep, sets weeping all.

LXXIII.

With thoughts that overflowed in tears, away
The gentle scholar hastened, to the side
Of her whose second father from that day
He never ceased to be. Glenaveril vied
With Eleanor in response to the sway
Of this quaint, innocent, eccentric guide
Philosopher and friend. But, weeping still,
He gazed bewildered on Glenaveril ;

LXXIV

And on his gaze weird visions rose and rolled.
Adown the Chiaja clattering, grim and wroth,
Rode the Black Douglas. In the distance tolled
A passing bell. With folds of sable cloth
The balcony was, like a scaffold, stoled.
Fierce crowds below it waited, nothing loth,
The opening of some hideous spectacle
Announced beforehand by that passing bell.

LXXV.

‘What is the matter?’ noticing the fear
 In her friend’s eyes, said Eleanor; and he,
 ‘For heaven’s sake tell me, ere the rest I hear,
 ‘What may his lordship’s occupation be?’
 ‘That of a man, the noblest and most dear,
 ‘Who loves your little Eleanor,’ laughed she.
 ‘Ah, but—is he a soldier?’ ‘No, thank heaven!’
 ‘A sailor, then?’ ‘Nor yet a sailor even.’

LXXVI.

‘A sportsman?’ ‘Oh, field sports he cannot bear!’
 ‘But hunting, racing, steeplechasing?’ ‘Yes,
 ‘Thro’ picture galleries, and after rare
 ‘Editions of engravings.’ ‘Then God bless
 ‘His chase!’ laughed Edelrath. Into thin air
 His visions vanished. All his cheerfulness
 Returned. The dread Glenaveril ghosts grew dim,
 And shook no more their ‘gory locks’ at him.

LXXVII.

Before the three friends separated, they
 Agreed to meet in Germany, and make
 A tour thro’ the Black Forest. But one day
 Glenaveril wrote to Edelrath, ‘Forsake,
 ‘O Shepherd Sage, thy flocks on Himelay,
 ‘And hasten here to Baden, for the sake
 ‘Of Eleanor; whose state forbids, I fear,
 ‘Our further progress. We await you here.’

LXXVIII.

Hence the Professor's pilgrimage : and hence
His fortunate arrival at the gate
Of that drear house ; altho' no warning sense
Of his loved lady's miserable state
His steps had hastened. It was Providence
(The name man's gratitude bestows on Fate
When she, so often cruel, shows contrition)
That managed this most timely apparition.

LXXIX.

The old servant, he had greeted with a nod
Of ignorant gladness, led him to the hall
In ominous silence ; there, with feet unshod,
Crept to the bier, and plucked away the pall
That hid the dead man's face. ' The curse, O God,'
Groaned Edelrath, ' hath fallen after all !'
And back he reeled with an instinctive cry
' Glenaveril—violent death—fatality !'

CANTO II.

CHILDHOOD.

I.

THERE is a Hades, the unblessed sojourn
Of spirits not departed, who await
A signal to go on, or to return.

Athwart the obscurity of that dim state
Voices and visions float from either bourne,
Vague and confused ; and the disconsolate
Spirit, from life half loosed and yet not free,
Knows not which world the nearest world may be.

II.

There, each surrounding scene, each neighbouring
face,

Glimmers uncertain thro' a shadowy veil ;
And faint as echo from a distant place
Falls every sound. Long in that dolorous dale,
Where thro' the twilight of sensation pace
With muffled steps, and shrouded features pale,
The phantoms of realities, lay still
The soul of Eleanor Glenaveril.

III.

An infant voice, the voice of her own child,
To human life recalled her. She obeyed
Its bidding, and with a compliance mild
Resumed the load by love and duty laid
Upon a patient tenderness that smiled
Only thro' tears. But close beside her stayed,
Soothing her sad life's solitary path
To its lone goal, the faithful Edelrath.

IV.

Back to the vast domains, whose lord was now
A cradled infant, she had wished to take
The widow's son with hers, and bring the two
As brethren up together, for the sake
Of the dead mother; but no prayer, no vow,
And no persuasion, could avail to shake
The resolution of the maiden aunt,
Whose 'yea' and 'nay' were made of adamant.

V.

To Edelrath, who had to Stuttgart gone
Charged to deliver Eleanor's request,
'No, Sir,' she said, 'Emanuel is the son
'Of a poor German Pastor who addressed
'His blameless life (which had no fault but one,
'That it was all too brief, alas!) with zest
'To serving God. As did his father, so
'Doth it behove Emanuel to do.

VI.

' For that high task one life sufficeth not.
' Its due accomplishment must be ensured
' By an inheritance of virtues, got
' From generations that have been inured,
' Fathers and children, to the humble lot,
' But high vocation, that of yore allured
' The first beginner of a saintly line
' Of men devoted to its claim divine.

VII.

' My brother's life was all too short for this.
' The son must finish what the sire began.
' And Providence hath in that boy of his
' A miracle vouchsafed us. What a man
' The child will be ! Just look at him ! He is
' An infant Samson, born to lead the van
' Of Israel to battle, undismayed
' In these bad days when Faith herself's afraid.

VIII.

' Not one of his dead kindred equalled him,
' Not at his age (how bravely built and stout
' The little body stands !) in strength of limb.
' The generations, that seemed half worn out
' Before his birth, like sleeping Cherubim
' Were only resting ; and, with force no doubt
' By sleep refreshed, concentrated at length
' In one brave effort all their gathered strength.

IX.

'Yet I am not ungrateful. You may tell
'The English lady that I thank her, Sir,
'Both for myself and for Emanuel ;
'And tell her, too, how much I pity her.
'But she is young. Long may she live, and well
'Watch over her own boy ! He is the heir
'Of a great name and fame ; and he, too, hath
'Traditions to preserve, Herr Edelrath.

X.

'May he grow up a gallant nobleman,
'The pattern of what nobleness should be !
'My nephew and adopted son, Sir, can
'Never be more, nor ever less, than he
'Was born to be : a good Samaritan,
'To lift up Faith, and heal her wounds, when she
'Faints by the way ; or else her oracle,
'Filled with the voice of God, like Samuel.

XI.

'Farewell ! I thank the lady for her kind
'Intentions to the boy. And I thank you,
'Herr Edelrath. I have a grateful mind,
'Tho' I've an independent spirit too.
'And you have that about you I'm inclined
'To like at once. I think you, Sir, a true
'Good man, and to be trusted. And I'm glad
'You've come to see me, and my little lad.'



XII.

Edelrath, notwithstanding his defeat,
Respected Mistress Müller's honest pride.
The young Emanuel's image left a sweet
And bright impression on his mind. He sighed,
Comparing the abundant life that beat
In that young Teuton's babyhood, bold-eyed,
And nimble-footed, with the drooping grace
Of the last scion of Glenaveril's race.

XIII.

Baptised in tears, and by a mother's groans
Greeted to life and sorrow, this lone child
Was all the more beloved. The pleading moans
Of Ivor's plaintive infancy beguiled
Grief to soft response, mimicking Joy's tones.
Upon her babe the weeping mother smiled
With widowed eyes ; and, sombre as regret,
Hope hailed a promise that recalled a threat.

XIV.

The babe lived on, grew up, became a boy ;
About his being felt a mother's love
Sweetened by sadness ; learned to look for joy
In tear-stained eyes, and thro' the hushed house
move
With unaccompanied steps, whose echoes coy
Scared not the sensitive quietness above
Floors that were haunted by the shadow of death,
Where Mirth in whispers spake with bated breath.

XV.

Dwellers in boreal regions by the pole
Call twilight day, and know no other light :
Like theirs, there is a twilight of the soul
Where, as a polar sun, by day and night
Tho' pale, yet beautiful, throughout the whole
Of its dim summer beaming darkly bright,
A love that sets not thro' a shadowy air
Shines on strange flowers that only blossom there.

XVI.

Such blossoms in young Ivor's childhood grew.
The solitary child contèmplated
Shadow and depth undaunted. Well he knew,
By some wise instinct in his being bred
From griefs not his, that heaven's transcendent blue,
Dazzling the hawk's eye on the mountain's head,
A sweeter and serener glory takes
Reflected from the bosom of dark lakes.

XVII.

Some childhoods are there, that impatient pass
Into life's sewer of common cares, almost
As rapid as the rinsings of a glass
Down from the garret to the gutter tossed
By some wild Magdalen, whose midnight mass
Is a libation to the unlaid ghost
Of her slain innocence. Where such drops fall
No blossoms spring. The gutter takes them all.

XVIII.

Others there be whose days are drops of dew
That softly, droplet after droplet, sliding
From flower to flower, in sheltered peace pursue
Hushed grassy courses; all their sweetness hiding
Till from its silent growth a rivulet new
The woodland wins, along whose wavelets gliding
On sunbeams, and on moonbeams, fearless elves
Under dim forest leaves disport themselves.

XIX.

And there's a beauty that demands the light,
Bursting, like glory from the battle plain,
Full-blown. A whole world's homage is its right;
The sun is not solicited in vain;
He shines to be admired; from alpine height
To height, from shore to shore, from main to main,
The god goes radiant, gilding, as it rolls,
Each wave between the Indus and the poles.

XX.

But oh, that beauty born beneath the veil,
The Isis of the heart! By many a fold
Its mystic vesture tells the silent tale
Of charms that eyes profane may not behold:
Whilst to its own appointed priest the pale
Composure of the sacred image, stoled
In sweet repose, if ruffled not, reveals
The secret it from all beside conceals.

XXI.

Lift not the veil ! Divined in silence, leave
The beauty hid beneath its holy hem !
Poësy, Childhood, Faith, Love, Passion, weave
(Like the wise moth, ere round the rose's stem
With wavering joy his budded winglets heave)
O'er them a mystery that shelters them
From the rude touch, and the inquisitive eye ;
Lift not the veil ; but worship, and pass by !

XXII.

Thirteen still summers slumbrous in the shade
Of agèd oaks, whose dusky boughs were green
Ere yet the first Glenaveril's sword had laid
Its lordly rule upon their rich demesne :
Thirteen hushed winters in dim halls arrayed
With the heraldic banners of thirteen
Glenaverils : thirteen happy hidden years
Of all that childhood loves, and love endears :

XXIII.

And then, one evening, in a quiet hour
When o'er her somnolent autumnal bed
The sweetness of the wasted lily-flower
Drooped, in the dewy twilight, a wan head,
The pensive smile that lit that lonely bower
Softly became the smiling of the dead ;
And Eleanor, Glenaveril's Countess, slept
Once more by him whose loss her life had wept.

XXIV.

They laid the mother in the father's grave :
They hailed the orphan, head of all his race :
O'er leagues of woodland, and by lengths of wave,
The boy beheld his feudal rule embrace
A hundred vassal homes : himself the slave
And lord of that high solitary place
Above them all, which linked, from sire to son,
The lot of many with the life of one.

XXV.

The death of Eleanor Glenaveril
Left Edelrath her child's sole guardian.
Her dying prayer implored him to be still
The guide of Ivor's boyhood : and (so ran
The fond injunction of her husband's will)
To him, in preference to all the clan,
Was given, until the boy became of age,
The management of his wide heritage.

XXVI.

And now, remembering a long-nursed intent
Of his dear lady (in whose faithful heart
Each unforgotten face and incident
Of her brief wifeness had become a part
Of one supreme, sustaining sentiment
That found a sort of sweetness in the smart
Of the sharp memories it was pastured on)
His thoughts reverted to the widow's son.

XXVII.

So to Emanuel's aunt he wrote. Ere now
Letters he had exchanged with her. He said
Ivor was suffering from a cruel blow :
The Countess of Glenaveril was dead :
His wish, like hers, was that the boys should know
And love each other : by which motive led,
Ivor and he were now upon their way
To Stuttgart, for perchance a lengthened stay.

XXVIII.

The announcement of this project much delighted
That agèd maiden. That the heir of wide
Domains and ancient titles, uninvited,
Should come from his own country to abide
In Stuttgart for her nephew's sake, excited
And flattered greatly her plebeian pride ;
Which, had Emanuel first from Stuttgart wended
To visit Ivor, would have been offended.

XXIX.

For every sentiment is more or less
Mixed with another in the heart of man ;
And in the sentiment of lowliness
There lurks a secret vanity. This plan
Appeared to Mistress Müller to redress
An inequality of birth and span
A gap which, thus got over, left to pride
A little balance, all on her own side.

XXX.

Nevertheless the prudent spinster deemed
That when her nephew's star into conjunction
With Gemini was coming, it beseemed
The occasion she should preach to him with unction
A homily ; wherein what she esteemed
Her knowledge of the world performed the function
A pinch of salt does in a strawberry ice,
Of spoiling something naturally nice.

XXXI.

'Emanuel,' she said, 'remember now
'That a young, rich, aristocrat is he,
'And but the child of lowly parents thou.
'You will not, either of you, feel or see
'This difference between you (that I know)
'So long as boys and playfellows you be :
'For between boys, if boys with boys be friends,
'The intercourse on sentiment depends.

XXXII.

'But bear in mind, my nephew, bear in mind
'Thou and this young Glenaveril will be men
'A few years hence : for thou anon wilt find
'That between one man and another, when
'Their stations differ in degree and kind,
'Even sentiment is regulated then
'By that which, if a man thro' life would pass
'Respected, bids him cling to his own class.

XXXIII.

‘ And as thy father’s was, and as ere then
‘ Thy father’s father’s, so is thy career
‘ A simple village pastor’s. Honest men
‘ And women, born in the same humble sphere,
‘ Loved and revered them, as in thee again
‘ The same folk the same virtues will revere.
‘ Their lot to them sufficed ; and unto thee
‘ Sufficient also must thine own lot be.

XXXIV.

‘ In other spheres hath young Glenaveril’s lot,
‘ ‘Mid other folk, by other fates, been cast.
‘ Respect thyself, dear child, that he may not
‘ Cease to respect thee. In the days long past
‘ I, too, was young ’—She paused, and one bright spot
Of sudden colour flushed and flickered fast
Thro’ the grey quiet of her withered cheek,
And her eyes softened, and her face grew meek.

XXXV.

‘ Yes, I was young, and had my trials too.
‘ I might, by yielding to the generous prayer
‘ Of one above me born, have lost the clue
‘ Which, kept, (thank God!) hath aided me to fare
‘ Thro’ life, lone woman tho’ I be, still true
‘ And loyal to the lowly name I bear
‘ Without a blush. The right and power to guard
‘ From harm thine orphaned youth, are my reward.’

XXXVI.

And, as with moistened eyes she murmured this,
The stern old veteran of virtue bent
Above the boy's fair forehead, with a kiss
Whose grave caress was such a rare event,
And fraught with so much more of awe than bliss,
To him it seemed a solemn sacrament.
Then, with a sigh that haply to the dead
Some message bore, 'Be brave, my child!' she said.

XXXVII.

But, like snow castles in the sun, all these
Cold fortresses by Pride and Prudence planned,
The warmth of Ivor's nature by degrees
Melted away. No heart could long withstand
The charm of his unconscious power to please;
And the first captive to its soft command
Was the old dame herself. Against her will
Her bosom yearned to young Glenaveril.

XXXVIII.

A *doctrinaire* in sentiment, who held
That all affections must perforce obey
Some principle or precept, she rebelled,
Albeit in vain, against the insidious sway
Of this instinctive fondness that up-welled
Spontaneously, in a mysterious way,
From depths disturbed by some new sense of beauty
Owning no source in reason or in duty.

XXXIX.

‘What is this blue-eyed cherub from above
‘To me, or I to him,” the old lady sighed,
‘That I should waste on him a wealth of love
‘By not one claim of kinship justified?’
Her pride against this new affection strove,
And the affection that subdued her pride
She grudged her heart, as housewives grudge their
house
Some dainty deemed by thrift superfluous.

XL.

It vexed her that from her well-guarded store
Of tenderness the stranger’s child had won,
In one short month, without an effort, more
Than to the claim of her own brother’s son
Nature and duty had vouchsafed before.
Excuse for this injustice found she none
In reason: but mysterious sympathies
Lurked in the light of Ivor’s wistful eyes.

XLI.

As if to right the balance thus set wrong,
An instinct just as unaccountable,
By some inverse attraction no less strong,
Drew Edelrath towards Emanuel:
Not to the loss of that affection long
To Ivor given; but with a livelier spell
That spoilt his cherished theories, because
It seemed to contradict all natural laws.

XLII.

'Tis strange,' he mused, 'the more that I compare
'The characters of these two boys, the more
'Inexplicable to my mind they are.
'Hard is it Nature's mysteries to explore,
'And this seems one of those exceptions rare
'To her fixed order, that confound the lore
'Of the biologist, who must admit
'He cannot penetrate the cause of it.

XLIII.

'Here, from a race of peaceful shepherds springs
'A little warrior, born to rule and fight;
'And there, from a long line of warrior kings
'Comes forth at last a peaceful shepherd wight,
'Meek as a lamb. What freak of Nature brings
'Such miracles about, transcending quite
'The jurisdiction of her own decrees,
'By gathering laurel crowns from olive trees?'

XLIV.

Albeit the gentle optimist was well
With nature's eccentricities contented.
'For Heaven,' thought he, 'ordained this miracle
'That hath to the Church Militant presented
'A champion bold in young Emanuel,
'And in our Ivor's milder vein prevented
'Renewal of the curse whose horror still
'Haunts the red records of Glenaveril.'

XLV.

Such was the situation of these four
Constituents of a chance-made family.
Won by a charm she never felt before,
The hard old daughter of the Bourgeoisie
In noble birth found much to praise, and more
To love. So great is the capacity
Of adaptation that discretely dwells
In all imperishable principles !

XLVI.

Emanuel who, tho' by nature gay
Gallant and frank, had in the solitude
Of his chilled childhood missed the ripening ray
By sympathy diffused from souls imbued
With its caressing warmth, now day by day
In Ivor's loved companionship renewed
The ever-growing consciousness of joy
That fills the first fresh friendship of a boy.

XLVII.

And Edelrath, whose own youth, vowed too soon
To study, ne'er before had known the bright
Vivacity of boyhood, this late boon
Enjoyed vicariously in the delight
Of those young hearts. With his ripe afternoon
Their fresh morn mingled ; and, in time's despite,
Their boyhood gave its youth to warm the sage
Whose love, to light their boyhood, gave his age.

XLVIII.

Ivor himself, the vivifying sun
 Of that small universe that round him moved,
 Giving to each what each most wanted, won
 From all in turn the love his nature loved :
 Adventurous with Emanuel ; anon
 Studious with Edelrath ; and, as behoved,
 To the old aunt so tenderly he bore him,
 She found herself beginning to adore him.

XLIX.

Thus the two boys, like brothers, hand in hand
 Wending the selfsame path, and side by side,
 Youth's frontier reached ; whence that untravelled
 land,
 The Future, opens, and the ways divide.
 The management of half a county, spanned
 Superbly by Glenaveril's Earldom wide,
 Recalled to England once in every year
 The presence of its guardian and its heir.

L.

Ivor, on these occasions, would not quit
 Emanuel : and so, with Edelrath
 And him, Emanuel went. ' No help for it !'
 The old aunt sighed. ' That little wizard hath
 Bewitched us all, and we must needs submit.'
 But great was her bewilderment and wrath
 When letters she from Edelrath received
 Recording feats her nephew had achieved :

LI.

What famous sport at Orchester he had :
How well he looked when mounted on his filly,
In scarlet coat and leather breeches clad :
How at Glenaveril Castle every gilly
Would go thro' fire and water for the lad :
And (here the old maid's very soul grew chilly
With horror) how up strath, and glen, and crag,
That future village pastor stalked the stag.

LII.

Her perturbation was in part relieved
By Edelrath. With ardour he explained
The Christian muscularity achieved
By England's Church ; whose Clergy thus main-
tained
In strength robust the doctrine they received
From Wittemberg. But his success sustained
A serious check the moment she caught scent
Of certain plans on which his mind was bent.

LIII.

His wish, and Ivor's was (the truth to tell)
That, as the agent for Glenaveril, he
Should be succeeded by Emanuel ;
And that, meanwhile, Emanuel should be
Trained for the duties he appeared so well
By nature fitted to discharge. But she
Listened to these proposals as, they say,
Ulysses listened to the Siren's lay.

LIV.

‘ A false position,’ she replied, ‘ destroys
‘ The truth of character. The boys are friends,
‘ And that is well. So long as they are boys,
‘ Friends let them be. But friendship’s charm depends
‘ For all its graces, and for all its joys,
‘ Upon complete equality; which ends
‘ With childhood. The equality of men
‘ Is but the dream of childhood come again;

LV.

‘ And they who dream it, tho’ their beards be grey,
‘ Are babes who into second childhood fall.
‘ No disrespect to *you*, friend, by the way !
‘ *Your* childhood you have ne’er outgrown at all,
‘ And you are just as much a child to-day
‘ As you were forty years ago. I call
‘ Such childhood quite another sort of thing.
‘ But I, a born old maid, to old age cling.

LVI.

‘ Your pupil’s course you from your heart dictate.
‘ But, by your leave, my head guides mine and me.
‘ The boys are nearly come to man’s estate ;
‘ And, if they are to enter on it free,
‘ ’Tis best for both that they should separate
‘ Till each becomes what each was born to be :
‘ Ivor, the lord of all Glenaveril ;
‘ Emanuel, God’s servant, if God will !’

LVII.

How many generous ideas ere now
Good Sense, with its stout truncheon, hath struck
down !

It takes them for illusions ; and we know
Good Sense spares no illusions but its own.
Sentiment aims too high, and Sense too low :
Between them both the ball of life is thrown
Wide of the mark, and never hits it fairly :
Genius alone sees just, and that but rarely.

LVIII.

Edelrath, possibly, had judged aright,
But in his judgment he lacked faith. The scheme
Of Mistress Müller was erroneous quite ;
But Error never doubts. All men who seem
Convinced, we should mistrust with all our might.
The danger from such persons is extreme,
Because all those who of their own have none
By other men's convictions are undone.

LIX.

And so the dame's uncompromising will
Prevailed ; and all things as she wished them went ;
Alone to Oxford went Glenaveril,
Emanuel to Tübingen was sent.
That she had done her duty she was still
Convinced when, one year after this event,
Emanuel she sent for, blessed him, sighed
'Now let thy servant part in peace !' and died.

LX.

Her will survived her: and it was decided,
In deference to the wishes of the dead
Who had for this contingency provided,
That not till after three full years were fled
Ivor (whatever chance to each betided
Before the stipulated time was sped)
Should with Emanuel hold the least relation,
Or seek, in aught, to alter his vocation.

LXI.

For her belief had been that, to the path
Of safety bound thus far, Emanuel
(Equipped for battle with the sons of Gath)
Would, of his own accord, decline to dwell
Among the tents of Kedar. Edelrath,
Assured that with his pupils all was well,
To Heidelberg retired, until the last
Of those probationary years was past.

LXII.

But o'er the separated friends he still
His fatherly, tho' distant, watch maintained.
They from the least evasion of the will
Of the dead woman loyally refrained.
So to Emanuel and Glenaveril
Only the memories and the hopes remained
Of their old union. But still hope is strong,
And memory still is sweet, while life is young.

LXIII.

O Youth, O Childhood, fugitive angels you,
That, once gone back to Heaven, return no more !
In vain our hearts invoke you to renew
The joys that followed you : in vain implore
The bounty of a single bead of dew
That perished with you from our paths before
We knew you gone. The only dew that wets
Those pathways now, falls there from vain regrets.

LXIV.

Regrets that, while you lingered here below,
We knew not that you would so soon depart :
Regrets that you are gone : regrets to know
That you will come no more : regrets that start
To life at every backward glance we throw :
Regrets that cling to the discouraged heart,
When all the joys that smile on later years
Lost youth's *memento mori* fills with fears.

LXV.

O Heaven ! to have been young, and all youth was,
All we have felt and cannot feel again,
Still to remember, and to find, alas,
That the remembrance of lost joy is pain !
'Tis ever drinking from an empty glass.
Better the full glass broken, than the vain
Importunate wild cravings, that caress
With pining lips its perfect emptiness !

LXVI.

Fall in the fresh delight of victory,
Young warriors ! In your bridal garments dressed,
On your death biers, young virgin brides, go by !
Perish, young infants, on your mother's breast !
And you, in love's first kiss, young lovers, die,
Dreaming of beauty still to be possessed !
Let earth, thro' you, whose bliss no memory mars,
Send up one happy message to the stars !

LXVII.

Say to them, you, 'O wistful stars, down there,
'Hid in the depth of night's primæval dome
'From your bright eyes, that seek her everywhere,
'Happiness dwells. From her abode we come.
'There have we seen and known her ; and we bear
'This message of the earth, her human home,
'From star to star, thro' all your shining mists
'Of suns and planets, "Happiness exists !"'

LXVIII.

Why do the stars with such reproachful eyes
Search all the dismal avenues of night ?
What questions that admit of no replies
Come trembling to us on their plaintive light ?
'Alas,' they seem to say, 'earth's look belies
'The tidings carried in their heavenward flight
'By those young messengers she sent us. Yes,
'They sung to us of earthly happiness.

LXIX.

'What have you done with it? Where is it? Who
'Are its possessors? Yonder man, that glides
'Down the dark alley stealthily, below
'His cloak gleams something that he grasps and
hides,
'But can it be his happiness? Ah, no!
'Hark! thro' the sleeping house what harsh sound
grides
'I' the shutter'd dark? Doth happiness emit
'That sullen cry? or is it the centrebit?

LXX.

'Is it for happiness dark hands explore
'Those rummaged coffers? Is it happiness
'Yon woman, hovering by the half-shut door,
'On every passing stranger strives to press?
'Who are earth's happy ones? and where their store
'Of undiscoverable earthly bliss?
'Lurks it beneath the lids of eyes that keep
'Its stolen treasures only while they sleep?'

LXXI.

What to such questioners can we reply?
Is all earth's happiness a heartless boast?
Is it not lest the legend of earth's joy
Should all too soon become a legend lost,
That in their unsuspecting youth they die
Who still believe in it? And we (sad host
Of mourners!) hide our griefs, and whisper low,
Lest them, and it, our voice should disavow.

LXXII.

For who would blast what those young lips have
blessed ?

Or who the promise they proclaimed belie ?
For their sakes, Sorrow, in thine aching breast
Stifle the vain involuntary sigh !

For their sakes, Misery, be thy groans suppressed !
And smile, Old Age ! Lo, as thou limpest by,
Along the hedge the honeysuckle flings
Her frolic blossoms, and the linnet sings !



CANTO III.

THE WORLD.

I.

'O ENGLAND, O my Country!' These are not
The last words spoken by the lips of Pitt;
And that's unlucky, for the words have got
A fine grandiloquence that seems to fit
Lips so sententious. I've been told that what
Was really said (but I'll not vouch for it)
By that great man before death closed his eyes
Was 'Bring me one of Bellamy's veal pies!'

II.

But howso'er that be, O England, O
My Country, canst thou, unashamed, recall
All thou hast lived to lose without a blow,
And gain without a blush? Slav, Teuton, Gaul,
In turn deride thee, while the meanest foe
Thy menace mocks: and how ironical
Sounds History's voice when she records thy praise
Of that 'August Ally' of other days!

III.

Praise, till he fell ! Then, wast thou first to preach
The sanctimonious sermon o'er his doom ;
Proclaiming all his sins, and damning each ;
Tagging the moral to the dead man's tomb ;
And still too dull to see thou didst impeach
Less the foiled gamester than the fawning groom
Of his good fortune, who first shared the pelf,
Then called ' Police ! ' and slyly hid himself.

IV.

O England, O my Country ! Is thy sun
Sunk in a fog-bank bred from its own heats ?
O land of Nelson, and of Wellington,
The prowess of thine armies and thy fleets
What now attests ? Vain victories, soon as won
Repented and renounced—the smouldering streets
Of Alexandria—and the dead that still
Lie unavenged upon Majuba Hill !

V.

Dupe of thy Sadducean policy,
That owns no spirit, trusts no future state,
Lives for the hour, and with the hour shall die !
Fortune plays fairly, and doth ne'er checkmate
Nations, or men, without the warning cry
Of ' check ! ' first given—tho' often heard too late.
But thou, long since, from east and west hast heard
(O be it not in vain !) that warning word.

VI.

O England, O my Country ! far and wide
The nations ask what hath become of thee,
And why thy sons repent their father's pride
In thy renown. What can we answer ? We
Who, to protect it, have been forced to hide
Thy sullied flag ! Must this the answer be ?
'Tho' rich, not proud, 'tis our especial merit
'To join a full purse to a lowly spirit.

VII.

'What boots an empire to our burdened isle ?
'Or why retain a sway that's too extensive,
'And costs, at least, a farthing every mile ?
'Soldiers and ships are horribly expensive.
'At all who scoff we can afford to smile,
'It costs us nothing to be inoffensive,
'To avenge offence would cost us much, and still
'We serve the gospel when we save the till.

VIII.

'Repose is gained with every province lost ;
'Let other nations boast that they are growing
'Greater and stronger, be it still our boast
'That we remain the richest and most knowing !
'Our trade's the largest, and our wealth the most,
'And while our mills and furnaces keep going,
'And our free mart invites even foes to stock it,
'Our pride is where it should be—in our pocket !'

IX.

O England, O my Country ! And hast thou
No nobler creed than ever to forsake
The feeble, fawn upon the strong, bestow
Base blessings on each upstart power, and shake
A coward's fist at every fallen brow ?
Degenerate land, beware ! The storm may break
On thee thyself, when skies seem most serene,
And find thee friendless—as thy friends have been !

X.

Themistocles once boasted he knew how
A small State to convert into a great,
But, with less effort, our new statesmen know
How to convert into a little State
A mighty Empire. And this science now
By skilled adepts, whom none can emulate,
Is nightly taught us at that National
And Public School near Westminster's old Hall.

XI.

Glenaveril, as became a youthful peer,
To whom the privilege, tho' grudged, is given,
His place upon its benches took. And here
Each afternoon, from half-past four till seven,
Inhaled the soporiferous atmosphere
Of those Elysian Meadows smooth and even,
Wherein the lordly leaders of the State
On its affairs till dinner-time debate.

XII.

His station on that Bridge of Sighs he chose
 (The short Cross Bench) that spans the narrow
Between the hostile armies led by those [space
 Last veterans of the old illustrious race
Of English Oligarchs: and, as they rose
 To right and left, from this impartial place
He viewed (as, in the play, Mercutio views)
The rival Capulets and Montagues.

XIII.

What stately form, in that historic hall
 Now rising as the expectant cheer ascends,
Stoops the swayed outline of its stature tall,
 And o'er the box upon the table bends
Brows weighty with stored thought about to fall
 In unpremeditated speech, that blends
Slow-gathering forces in its wavelike swell?
Behold Cæcilius, and observe him well!

XIV.

For not yet by the influence or the power
 It hath attained can this chief's greatness be
Completely gauged. 'Tis growing still. His hour
 Is not yet come. A force mysterious he,
By friends and foes but half-divined. A tower
 That, high above their heads, beholders see
Looming aloft in cloudy solitudes:
Their course it points, but their approach eludes.

XV.

Times low and little—the blind craft that loses
A cause to catch a vote—the artifice
That stoops to conquer—the sly speech that glozes
Meanness with solemn plausibilities,
Or the loud rant that upon crowds imposes—
Need not such men. Them, dunces deem unwise,
And cowards rash. But by such men alone
Great times are guided, and great deeds are done.

XVI.

Let the times ripen—let the hour arise
When, from the grim inevitable crash
Of all the smooth deceits and pleasant lies
Men still deem safe, bewildered by the flash
Of knowledge known too late, they lift scorched eyes,
And stretch lamed hands to seize—not truthless
trash,
But rescue from it—then, and then alone,
Thy worth, Cæcilius, shall be fully known!

XVII.

Tho' born the scion of a House that boasts
Historic title to its rich domains,
Long while about the obscure and bitter coasts
Of that bleak land where Want's chill winter
reigns,
The hardest labourer of those struggling hosts
Who daily dig for bread its stubborn plains,
His sad youth toiled; and from its toil hath wrought,
To enrich his manhood, treasures dearly bought.

XVIII.

Treasures of deepened thought and widened life ;
A well-stored memory and a ready wit ;
Prone to reflection, yet inured to strife,
Alike for study and for action fit ;
An English heart with high-born ardours rife ;
Fervid as Fox, but national as Pitt ;
And, for that cause, mistrusted by a time
When to be national is deemed a crime.

XIX.

Philosopher and Paladin in one ;
The soldier's courage, and the sage's lore ;
A searching intellect that leaves no stone
Unturned on any path its thoughts explore ;
A rush of repartee that, not alone
Dazzles, but scathes—like lightning flashing o'er
The loaded fulness of a brooding mind,
Scornful of men, but studious of mankind.

XX.

Observe his mien. Above the spacious chest
The large Olympian forehead forward droops
Its massive temples, as if thus to rest
The crowded brain their firm-built bastion coops ;
And the large slouching shoulder, as oppressed
By the prone head, habitually stoops
Above a world his contemplative gaze
Peruses, finding little there to praise.

XXI.

And, as the outward, so the inward man,
 Larger and loftier than are other men,
 To meet their level must contract its span,
 And stoop its height. Weak followers, now and then,
 While fearless strides the chieftain in their van,
 Lag in the rear so far behind that when
 The victory else were won 'tis lost at last,
 Because the baggage-waggons have stuck fast !

XXII.

As when (ah, woe the day !) with dauntless zeal
 To save Hibernia's garrison, he drew
 His trenchant blade, and his proud clarion's peal
 To the Freebooters' Camp defiance blew,
 What checked the hand? Why sank the lifted steel?
 A murmur thro' the host behind him flew,
 The baffled chief obeyed the muttered word,
 'And in the sheath, reluctant, plunged the sword.'

XXIII.

But lo ! where, lifting now his polished shield
 To parry darts shot straighter than his own,
 The supple Glaucus, smiling, takes the field :
 Evades the point, with deprecating tone
 Of well-bred wonder noble lords should yield
 To doubts unworthy of reply : smiles down
 The unanswered charge : from old Whig history
 quotes :
 And wards off arguments with anecdotes.

XXIV.

Supremely skilled to plead whatever cause
The most excites aristocratic fears
Before aristocrats, and win applause
For tones that never once offend their ears ;
The awful schedules of subversive laws
He cheerfully explains to shuddering peers,
And chats along, serene, complacent, gay,
Thro' bills whose clauses take your breath away.

XXV.

Fine type of that fine world before the Flood !
Wherein the attributes of statesmen were
An intellectual sublimate of Good
Society ; whose light elastic air
They breathed with every breath into their blood !
Statesmen to whom the State was an affair
Of tact and taste, and public life a staid
Decorous game by well-bred persons played !

XXVI.

Gifted with every charm of social grace
That to ability can reconcile
The envy of that influential race,
The slow and dull, is Glaucus. With a smile
And tap he splinters battle-axe and mace ;
Does all with ease ; and sets on fire the Nile,
Or rides 'cross country, with the same address,
Which ne'er betrays a moment's awkwardness.

XXVII.

Glaucus, a pure Patrician to the bone,
Serving Plebeian masters coarse and rough,
Seems all misplaced, as some fine Parian stone
At Smithfield used to prop a cattle trough !
Doth Misery make strange bedfellows alone,
When Glaucus, trained in arts polite enough
For the fine conduct of a Court Intrigue,
Drapes in brocade the fustian of the League ?

XXVIII.

But hush ! while yonder amiable bore
Fumbles the dismal Blue Book's dog-eared page,
His gentle eyes for drowsy texts explore,
And the House slumbers, thro' what seems an age,
Till all his melancholy task is o'er,
Gaze we around this oratoric stage,
And mark the actors waiting to come on ;
For ere 'tis dinner-time they'll all be gone.

XXIX.

Manly, yet courteous, bold, but debonair,
Gallus, even ere he rises, seems to smile
With lips so frank, and such a hearty air
Of English courage, that his looks meanwhile
Both welcoming friends and wistful foes prepare
For his straightforward onset's gallant style ;
A style that most from feeling wins its force,
And is, like Cæsar's, action in discourse.

XXX.

Ill was the chance that, in its direst need,
From the main body of the host, which he
Beyond all others seemed so fit to lead,
This dashing soldier called away, to be
A wandering ghost on an Elysian Mead !
With what exploits of genial chivalry
Would he have cheered the sullen troops that now
Droop, waiting trumpet notes which never blow !

XXXI.

Grave with each grace, mere speakers cast aside,
Of natural eloquence, by art refined
To periods that majestically glide
Like some Greek chorus,—from the bench behind
His wincing friends, Argyllus soars in pride,
And the hushed House forgets it has not dined ;
While even admiring foemen feel his spell ;
Let no dog bark. Behold Sir Oracle !

XXXII.

With what solemnity of purpose flow
Denunciations from that fluent tongue !
Like royal horses in a coach of show
The stately gestures bear the speech along,
Step finely out, and move extremely slow.
A coach so gorgeous, drawn by steeds so strong,
For common use seems all too grandly made ;
But how superb, on field days, for parade !

XXXIII.

Caught from some school that else hath left no trace,
His eloquence recalls a loftier day :
And, had he then been in 'another place,'
He might have braved, in some historic fray,
Burke's mighty sword, sustained with classic grace
Windham's skilled fence, rebuked the sprightly play
Of nimble Brinsley's pertinacious wit,
And breathed again tho' felled to earth by Pitt.

XXXIV.

From those who forge, to those who wield our laws,
Turn where the cheer around the woosack rings
While, crashing down on some ill-fated cause,
The massive mace of Caius sternly swings
Its ponderous strokes ; which yet expose no flaws
In his own mail, that round the giant clings
Close rivetted with links of finest steel ;
Links that no crevice to the foe reveal.

XXXV.

Roused to reply, scholastic Sylvius see !
Sedate, deliberate, and severely mild ;
Half priest, some hint ; but all alike agree
Whole lawyer ! With what learning undefiled,
(From Papist and from Puritan to free
The Church so cherished by her faithful child)
Had he but lived when our Sixth Edward died,
He could have argued law itself aside !

XXXVI.

He lacks not fire, but 'tis a fire subdued ;
Warm in defence, yet in attack well bred ;
Calm, but not tame ; in earnest, but not rude ;
His speech, ingenious, leaves, when all is said,
If little that can fix the attitude
Of wavering minds to Party votes unwed,
Yet much that, in its influence, pleases friends,
And nothing that even foes rebuked offends.

XXXVII.

But to Glenaveril all this stately scene
Looked dreamlike and devoid of real life,
As those phantasmal combats waged between
Heroic ghosts in Hades. From a strife
So noiseless, in a region so serene,
Oft strayed he down to where, with scalping-knife
And tomahawk, more savage foemen fight
Their barbarous battles all the livelong night.

XXXVIII.

And there, the sad spectator of the fray,
Its progress with a pensive pain he eyed ;
To him it seemed one vast insane display
Of wasted power, and passion misapplied.
Yet, in this motley, mannerless array
Of rufflers, move the men whose names with pride
Their country cherishes ; and here abides
The wisdom that o'er England's fate presides.

XXXIX.

Who, rising yonder, from firm lips unlocks
Words, like chained bulldogs chafing for release?
What front pugnacious! Doth he rise to box?
The Saints be thanked, your natural fears may cease!
Tho' fierce of heart as Sefton's fighting cocks,
His creed is Penn's, and his vocation Peace.
Those sturdy fists may not assault your nose,
And words must vent the instinctive wish for blows.

XL.

Big words they are! If Balbo's lore be small,
Large is his utterance, and his language strong.
With what fierce bile his blows about him fall!
What stripes the stout fanatic deals the throng
Of those who, unconverted by his call,
Presume to hold his doctrine in the wrong!
He should have lived when Lenthal filled the Chair,
And led the Saints to war as well as prayer!

XLI.

A later, leaner demagogue behold
In envious Casca. Scorning argument,
His manner of persuading is to scold;
His mode of proving, to misrepresent;
By no restraints of courtesy controlled,
His words the rancour of a lifetime vent;
And, if the art of speech be to provoke,
Far better Casca speaks than Tully spoke.

XLII.

More ignorant than Balbo, and with less
Redeeming faith in his own ignorance,
But better fitted to achieve success
In the rank game that's played for the main chance
By those political Macaires who guess
Each card in packs they've shuffled in advance,
Because impelled by more sustained ambition
For power, upon no matter what condition :

XLIII.

Abhorring all who in men's reverence stand
Above him (and how many such there be !)
Exhausting earth's grudged dignitaries, and
Embracing Heaven's, in that abhorrence, he,
With scarce one other talent for command,
By matchless menace hath attained to be
The secret despot of a Cabinet
That dare not disregard his faintest threat.

XLIV.

See, where, to cheer him from the lower hall,
His minions round the gangway congregate !
Great is their zeal, altho' their number small ;
And theirs life's strongest motives—Hope and
Hate ;
Hope of what ne'er hath been, and hate of all
That still is left of what were Church and State,
Each, of some revolution in the air,
A mimic Marat, or a mock Robespierre !

XLV.

Alas, that lost in such a brainless brood
 Sophronion's philosophic soul should be !
 Can Platos be by Cleons understood ?
 Fastidious zealot, dost thou dream to see
 The world reformed, with neither blows nor blood,
 On some ideal pattern planned by thee,
 When statecraft, changed to science in the schools,
 Shall build republics by enlightened rules ?

XLVI.

That world moves slowly, but moves all the same ;
 Tho' ne'er, Sophronion, hath it kept the tracks
 Thy dreams dictate. 'Twere better for thy fame
 Hadst thou been born when Hampden braved the
 tax,
 Eliot the Tower ! In Freedom's cause and name
 Thou wouldst have doomed the Stuart to the axe,
 On Cromwell's ear have Vane's Reform Bill urged,
 And—from the House by Colonel Pride been purged !

XLVII.

Hibernia's fame Triptolemus sustains,
 (' Her old good humour and good manners too ')
 When English sense from Irish wit obtains,
 In his discourse an animation new ;
 Fleet as Camilla's steed he ' scours the plains,'
 Cheers on the hunt with lusty *view halloo !*
 And tho' he rides with weight, as 'tis well known,
 Takes every leap, yet never yet was thrown.

XLVIII.

The rostrum now Historicus ascends.

Fighting to him, for fighting's sake is dear ;
 And if, at times, his style your taste offends,
 It charms to lusty life a Party cheer.
 With Hansard tingling at his fingers' ends,
 He rates the House, and yet the House cries
 'Hear !'

Such verve, such gusto, and such lively force !
 The whole so clever ! Must one add—so coarse ?

XLIX.

What fails his eloquence ? It is not wit.

His jokes are pregnant, and his sneers are smart.
 It is not strength. 'A hit, a palpable hit'
 In every sentence ! 'Tis what fails the art
 Of the praised actor who, to please the pit,
 Provokes its laughter, but lets down his part,
 Winks at his audience while he slaps his fob,
 And turns Charles Surface into swaggering Bob.

L.

Hist ! who comes next ? The Wizard of Finance !
 Whose spell on Budget Nights each bosom thrills
 Beneath a charm that turns to bright romance
 Bank Charters, Consols, and Exchequer Bills ;
 The Sugar Duty, or the Trade with France,
 Your soul, by turns, with fine emotion fills ;
 And squires, who tearless bore the fall of rents,
 Weep for the perils of the Three-per-Cents.

LI.

With what a choice variety of play
 The gesture pleases, as the utterance warms,
 While changing looks the changeful thoughts obey !
 So would Quintilian have composed his arms,
 And so Hortensius might have paused to lay
 Finger on palm, ere some new sentence charms
 The listening ear with periods rich, that rise
 In tones intensely dotting smallest 'i's' !

LII.

With what electric light the dark eye glows !
 From lips still placid with a smile urbane
 How smooth the long elaborate prelude flows !
 With what a rapture of sublime disdain
 The quivering frame the inward passion shows !
 Yet, ah !—what memories in the mind remain
 Of this grand stage play, when the show is o'er ?
Vox et præterea nihil—nothing more !

LIII.

Burke, Fox, Pitt, Chatham, Canning, Brougham, and
 Peel,
 All put together—by mere force of speech
 Could no such faith inspire, nor fan such zeal,
 As those to whom Grandævus loves to preach
 (Devout as Ghazis !) in his preaching feel.
 Yet this great orator's orations, each
 And all, we search, and search in vain, to find
 Aught of the smallest value to the mind.

LIV.

Not one new truth, not one deep thought, not one
Original fancy, or profound remark !
No gleam of wit that sheds new lights upon
Old commonplaces ! not a single spark
Of genius, or creative power ! When gone
The living voice, we wander thro' a dark
And tedious labyrinth of words, that say
Nothing the thankful mind can bear away.

LV.

The man himself, a Chillingworth in creed ;
Not his the mind that in its own deep well
Finds Truth, and, trusting her still voice, doth need,
To guide his steps, no noisier oracle.
To-day stout oak, to-morrow bending reed,
According as the wind may sink or swell ;
To him the weathercock's a heavenly force,
And its loud rattle regulates his course.

LVI.

Men of far-reaching action are born seers,
And their intelligence is in their eyes ;
That of the vulgar crowd is in its ears ;
Not light, but sound, the guiding force supplies
To its blind brain. It goes by what it hears ;
And, since to it the noisy seem the wise,
It dreads the thunder-clap, forgetting quite
That 'tis the lightning only that can smite.

LVII.

Yet great his gift, whom multitudes of men
With shut eyes follow, shouting to the sound
His mouth emits, and dancing blindfold when
Its strains they hear : and, were it only found
With insight and true statesmanship, who then
Would wish that gift ungiven? But gaze around !
Where'er this shepherd's pipe his sheep hath led,
The paths with ruin and disgrace are spread.

LVIII.

Confusion, and dismay, and wrath, and shame,
And death, and doubt, and pain, and tribulation
Are in the cup he ministers. The name
Of a once glorious and magnanimous nation,
To him entrusted, hath been bathed in blame,
And made the byword of humiliation.
Still to prolong his shameless shameful hour
Of personally comfortable power,

LIX.

Loosed, o'er a land betrayed, hath treason been,
To run, unreined, its sanguinary course ;
Victims the noblest, to appease obscene
And senseless idols, slain without remorse ;
And all the while, with self-admiring mien,
And throat with self-congratulation hoarse,
Soaked in his country's blood, yet blushing never
He boasts, and bawls, and babbles on for ever !

· LX.

And hath it come to this (ye gods, to this !)
The sad beginning of the end of all
Free States,—when their most trusted leader is,
Not he that can do best, whate'er befall,
But he that can talk most? Adown the abyss
Of some vexed crater, whence perpetual
Rumblings resound, and rank miasmas rise,
Glenaveril seemed to gaze with sickened eyes.

LXI.

His German training spoilt his English life ;
He could not catch the brisk enthusiasm
Of those around him. Paltry seemed the strife,
And mad the combatants. With no sweet spasm
Of emulous pride he to their fluttering fife
And rattling drum responded. A drear chasm
Of hopes, and loves, and faiths, unsatisfied,
Him from the world he lived in did divide.

LXII.

Not wholly for the public cause alone,
Do public men on public life bestow
Such passionate patientness. But he had none
Of those ambitions that, in youth's fresh glow,
The love of fame, or power, enkindles. Won
By dead men's hands, and his without a blow,
Was all that Boyhood, eager to begin
Its combat with the world, aspires to win.

LXIII.

Fair was the prospect, but it failed to please ;
 The spoils were his before the field was fought ;
 And, tho' his soul disdained unwishful ease,
 He strove with no man, for he wanted nought.
 Not his the rapture of tired hands that seize
 The poorest prize with passionate purpose sought.
 Man's life, if awed, is charmed, by the unknown :
 This awful charm was wanting to his own.

LXIV.

Yet powers were his which might, perchance, have
 won,
 (Had foes opposed him, or harsh fortune tried)
 The goal surrendered ere the race was won :
 Nor lacked his wit fine instincts oft denied
 To Fame's slow pilgrims who, by plodding on,
 Fulfil the dreams of that Parental Pride
 Which wafts Young Hopeful on a mother's prayer
 To Selborne's woolsack, or the Speaker's Chair.

LXV.

And Youth has sweeter hopes, and fairer dreams,
 Than those which politics can satisfy ;
 Its natural, and its best ambition seems
 To love, and to be loved. A glancing eye,
 A glowing lip, can fill with rosy gleams
 Of beauty the most leaden-coloured sky
 In life's first dawn ; and Ivor's young heart yearned
 With love's vast longings. Were they unreturned ?

LXVI.

Not by the Season's lovely *débutantes* !

All London's marriageable maidens smiled
Like ministering angels on the wants,
Still unavowed, of Fortune's thankless child.
Each beauteous bosom's sympathetic pants
Would all too willingly have reconciled
That lonely heart to the afflicting weight
Of the vast wealth it seemed to find too great.

LXVII.

A thousand fond maternal souls conferred
A kind anticipative parentage
Upon the orphan. The good creatures purred
With pride in offering to his tender age
Their trusty counsel ; while a heavenly herd
Of Houris hovered c'er the opening page
Of his young life, and all their wistful wings
About it fanned with amorous whisperings.

LXVIII.

He might have married, had he felt inclined,
The lively Lady Adeline Adair ;
No prettier brunette could Cupid find
Unwed between Belgravia and May Fair.
He might have wooed, nor found the maid unkind,
The beautiful Miss Spence, whose golden hair
Was rippled by the little Loves that heave
Entangled in sweet curls they cannot leave.

LXIX.

And there were Lady Betty, Lady Jane,
And Lady Susan, jealous, for his sake,
Of that pert fairy, Clementina Vane ;
Whose known vocation was to undertake
(With a good nature nothing could restrain,
Nor yet reiterated failure shake)
The amorous education, night by night,
Of each new Season's latest neophyte.

LXX.

A richer prize than all, he could have won
The great Scotch heiress, Maud McLeod, whose
face
And form might challenge fair comparison
With those of Manchester's Teutonic Grace.
Moulded she looked to sit superb upon
The rock-hewn throne of some heroic race,
A warrior queen, with helmet, spear, and shield ;
Tall as a Walkyr, blue-eyed as Criemhild !

LXXI.

But had she been, in these mild days, the bride
Of some pacific chief whose deeds are done
By means of words, she could have boldly vied
With elder rivals in the race still run
To snatch that sceptre once so deftly plied,
When thou wast still, lamented Palmerston,
The darling of the Fashion and the State,
By thine incomparably social mate !

LXXII.

What hosts, for his support, would she have brought
 To man, or storm, the Ministerial trenches!
 What ardour breathed into those battles fought
 About St. Stephens—for a change of benches!
 With what a zest would her sweet lips have taught
 The proper means to rid the Thames of stench,
 Or check the increase of beggary and beer,
 And prove that soldiers cost a deal too dear!

LXXIII.

And she could dance and flirt the livelong night,
 Yet keep the rose still fresh in her young cheek;
 Discuss the style of Milton's prose with Bright,
 Or rally Gladstone upon Homer's Greek.
 Wedded, she would have been a social light
 Whose guidance Fashion had been forced to seek,
 Or, Lowe's gay Pyrrha, ruled 'that pleasant cave,'
 And won Whig hearts from sprightly Waldegrave.

LXXIV.

In ceremonial hours so stately she,
 That all averred she was extremely fit
 For an ambassadress: yet could she be
 The soul of frolic when she fancied it;
 Serious enough, with Stanhope after tea
 To criticize the character of Pitt;
 Lively enough, to laugh at Osborne's jokes,
 And bet with young St. Leger on the Oaks!

LXXV.

Gaily the stiffest ground she galloped over ;
 And on her little stage performed all parts
 With equal grace ; could awe the boldest lover,
 And coax the shyest vote ; invade all hearts,
 Nor ever let her own heart's motion move her
 An inch too far : for hers were Dian's darts,
 Tho' Venus bound them in her zone together,
 And Cupid winged them with his warmest feather.

LXXVI.

Nor was it only each unwedded maid
 That smiled upon Glenaveril. Matrons fair
 To him in confidential tones betrayed
 The disappointments they were doomed to bear
 From conjugal neglect ; with sighs displayed
 The rents a young consoler might repair
 In ravaged hearts, and hinted a regret
 That they so late had their ideal met.

LXXVII.

What spell withheld him from the paradise
 That opened round him whereso'er he went ?
 Why gazed he with such welcomeless surprise
 On those fair fruits so eager to present
 Their unforbidden beauties to his eyes ?
 Alas, the cause of all his discontent
 Was that Content had nothing left to crave
 When Pleasure whispered ' Only ask, and have ! '

LXXVIII.

'Twas this indifference which had saved perchance
The boy's unvalued birthright from the pot
Wherein sly Jacob puts the inheritance
Of reckless Esau, when the brew is hot,
And Thriftless Hunger craves 'a last advance.'
But tho', like Esau, in his envied lot
Unenviably small was his delight,
Glenaveril lacked stout Esau's appetite.

LXXIX.

'Twas not a soul whose sweets the world had wasted,
No heart it was, by sated passion chilled,
That left on Life's large banquet board untasted
The cup by Fortune for her favourite filled :
His boyhood's blossom no spring frost had blasted,
No canker gnawed : yet May's blithe breathings
thrilled
But feebly its pure petals that reposed
In pensive peace round childhood's dreams, half
closed.

LXXX.

To all the affections of his life's brief past,
The loves that with his growth began and grew,
His nature clung, tenacious to the last ;
He missed the comrade of his youth. No new
Endearment o'er Emanuel's image cast
Effacing spells. And now, as nearer drew
The time for their reünion, life seemed brought
To a glad pause on that one pleasant thought.

LXXXI.

And here awhile will I, too, pause, to plead
 My right of calling every spade a spade.
 I wish each knight would saddle his own steed
 Whene'er the Press proclaims its next crusade.
 Men's virtues should not on men's vices feed :
 But counterfeited feeling's now a trade
 That all compete in. Who can say (not I!)
 This Age's signature's no forgery ?

LXXXII.

Meek Maiden Love, what art thou nowadays ?
 'Discreet attention to the eldest son !'
 Filial Affection ? 'Debts my dad defrays !'
 Parental love ? 'The brat is twenty-one !'
 Philanthropy ? 'A company that pays !'
 Virtue ? 'Denounce the deeds by others done !'
 Religion ? 'Force your clamorous catechism
 'On John and Joan, or else proclaim a schism !'

LXXXIII.

Nothing is what it calls itself. And I
 Myself am not a Cato, tho' I dare
 Assume the Censor's office. Ask you why ?
 Being an honest Sinner, I can't bear
 Fictitious Saints. 'But Heaven,' says Samuel Sly,
 'Is looking on, our dealings must be fair !'
 'Faith, my wise friend, if Heaven be in the matter,
 You'd best deal fairer, but you'll grow no fatter !



CANTO IV.

THE COMPACT.

I.

Now came that sweetest month of all the year
Ere Autumn's sigh hath Summer's smile effaced.
The seasons with the seasons interfere :
Spring chases Winter, and in turn is chased :
Winter too often, ere the leaf be sere,
Rich Autumn's treasures ransacks in haste :
And in the midst of Nature's civil strife
The year begins and ends its troubled life.

II.

Its calmest hours are in the month that blends
Summer with Autumn, when the glow of one
To the cool quiet of the other lends
A hushed voluptuous charm. And now was done
The long probation of the severed friends ;
Emanuel to Heidelberg had gone,
There in Theology to graduate ;
And there Glenaveril's coming did he wait.

III.

Of old, some dozen leagues the traveller went,
And, having travelled, he arrived at last ;
To-day he traverses a continent,
Yet neither travels nor arrives ; tho' fast
Across the world he flies, securely pent
In a snug cage, with pause for brief repast
At intervals, in places that remind him
Exactly of the places left behind him.

IV.

Europe exists no longer. In its place
Are railway stations. Watches supersede
Geography, and Time has swallowed Space.
'Two hours !' That means plain, mountain, moor-
land, mead,
Lake, river, sea-coast, valley, forest, chase,
Cathedrals, castles, cities. 'Tis agreed
To call this fiction's finish an arrival,
Tho' 'tis departure's horrible revival.

V.

Give up your tickets, and your passport show,
Be pushed about a platform up and down,
Then, bag and baggage, off again you go,
Omnibussed darkly thro' the sleeping town,
Reach your friend's house past midnight, when you
know
The family's in bed, and to your own
Creep sick, and sad, and tired, to sleep away
The recollections of a joyless day.

VI.

But in the luxuries of sentiment
Glenaveril was an epicure, and he
Had so arranged, that the long-wished event
Of his reünion with his friend should be
Graced and surrounded, to his heart's content,
With all appropriate influences, free
From the fatigue, confusion, and disgust
Of those who meet, not as they would, but must.

VII.

He and Emanuel on a certain day
And hour, 'twas settled, were again to meet
Upon the ruin-crested summit grey
Of Heidelberg. And now, with pausing feet,
Emanuel wound his solitary way,
Near sunset, up the mountain road, to greet
The three-years-absent comrade of a time
Dim-glimmering seen thro' Memory's misty clime.

VIII.

He pressed his heart, and sighed 'What ails me here?
'Why lags my foot when every step brings nigh
'The hour so wished-for, and the friend so dear?
'Why do I shrink and hesitate? and why
'So sinks my heart within me? Is it fear?
'Yes! fear to find no more what memory
'So long hath cherished, fear to find no more
'The youth I knew, the friend I loved, of yore,

IX.

' But, in his dear and gracious semblance dressed,
 ' Some stranger. I am changed, and why not he ?
 ' What feelings chase each other thro' my breast,
 ' And yet not one of them what it should be !
 ' To fear succeeds, not faith, but an unblessed
 ' And faithless curiosity. Ah, me !
 ' Sufficient is one sovereign sentiment
 ' To fill the heart with a divine content.

X.

' Why suffers it, about its simple throne,
 ' A tribe of courtiers that prescribe to it
 ' The regulated course of every one
 ' Of its own acts? What suitors to admit,
 ' When to give audience : when to be alone,
 ' And whether silence or discourse be fit
 ' To each occasion, as it comes, until
 ' They leave it nothing of its natural will.

XI.

' Oh, to love ignorantly, stupidly,
 ' And blindly, caring not (whate'er it be)
 ' To know, or understand, the reason why !
 ' Not asking Duty first to guarantee
 ' This impulse, Gratitude to certify
 ' That other, Prudence to safeguard Joy's free
 ' Improvident path, and Justice to approve
 ' The reckless liberality of Love !

XII.

'When all things change around us, why persist
' In striving to fix firm and fast forever
' That which of all things is the changefullest,
' A sentiment? Vain is the heart's endeavour
' The flux of its own feelings to resist ;
' Wave upon wave, flows by the fleeting river,
' And what clings fastest to the bank, anon
' We soonest lose : for we ourselves go on.'

XIII.

But time was not vouchsafed him to pursue
This self-analysis. A whirlwind warm
Of hugs enwrapped him, staggered, blinded, blew
His wits about in such a sweet alarm
Of doubts rebuked, that nothing more he knew
Than that he felt thro' every pore the charm
Of being loved ; an inarticulate joy
No chill reflection lingered to alloy.

XIV.

Hand clasped in hand, not heeding where they went,
This way, and that way, all beatified
And breathless in a bright bewilderment,
The two friends walked, and talked, and laughed,
and cried,
Questions, too rapid for reply, gave vent
To a delight that, in its haste, replied
To questions yet unasked ; and both replies
And questions were but stammering ecstasies.

XV.

When evening fell, and over vale and grove
And river, slowly reddening, sank the sun,
With farewell signal from the fort above
Saluted by a solitary gun,
Together seated in the dim alcove
Of a small hillside garden, overrun
With Autumn's scarlet creeper, they at last,
Into coherent conversation passed.

XVI.

To greet the arrival of the wished-for time
With honour due, Glenaveril had broached
A flagon old of golden Rudesheim :
And, while its genial influence encroached
On the reserve that clings, like morning rime,
To all unwonted joys, he thus approached
The subject which, tho' long deprived of speech,
Had occupied for years the thoughts of each.

XVII.

' Dost thou remember, my Emanuel,
' The promises we pledged to one another,
' On that sad morning of our last farewell ?
' Then we were children, both of us, my brother.
' Children we are no longer, but—ah well,
' We still are young enough to mourn a mother !
' Our choice in life upon ourselves depends :
' But one thing both must choose—to still be friends !

XVIII.

‘I know not yet thy projects—Hush! anon
‘We will discuss them—But, whate’er they be,
‘There’s one condition I insist upon,
‘They must not separate my friend from me.
‘Nay, speak not yet! I have but half begun
‘What I have waited years to say to thee.
‘Save when on some assured affection based,
‘Life drifts like sand by every wind displaced;

XIX.

‘And hence it was man’s earliest act on earth
‘To build a hearth, and found a family;
‘But we, the heirs of an unfamilied hearth,
‘Have nothing to hold on to, but the tie
‘Fate hath between us woven from the dearth
‘Of all life’s other bonds; and that is why,
‘If this tie snaps, our loosened lives must fall
‘Asunder, lacking any tie at all.

XX.

‘Marriage? Ah, yes—across an unknown sea
‘A voyage of adventure to find out
‘An unknown world! And which of us may be
‘Its Christopher Columbus? For no doubt
‘We cannot all be fortunate as he.
‘Better the world that we know all about!
‘Sweeter the paths that to the past are true,
‘And dearer the old faces than the new!

XXI.

' Moreover, marriage is youth's tomb, they say ;
 ' And who would bury youth ere youth be dead ?
 ' Our own is in the blossom of its May,
 ' And on its branches still the buds are red.
 ' Enough ! The fate that took so soon away
 ' Those who might else thy steps and mine have led
 ' By paths perchance diverging far and wide,
 ' Hath left us free to travel side by side.

XXII.

' And left us, also, in misfortune shared,
 ' One common heritage ; a constant one,
 ' Whose equalised effect hath half repaired
 ' The wrong by fortune to our friendship done
 ' Thro' inequalities which, if compared
 ' By vulgar standards (tho' by them alone)
 ' Seem vast indeed. But I have long devised
 ' How even these may all be equalised.

XXIII.

' A fortune larger than its owner's need
 ' Of all that it can give him, larger than
 ' The liberty it leaves him, is indeed
 ' Only a splendid burden to the man
 ' Whose life supports it ; and were mine but freed
 ' From half that burden which, as best it can,
 ' It bears unshared and unenjoyed, how blessed
 ' Would be its free enjoyment of the rest !

XXIV.

' Who but a bosom friend could render me
 ' This service? And what friend have I, but one?
 ' There's no one I can crave it of but thee.
 (' Peace! interrupt me not. I've not half done.)
 ' Thus halved, our fortune will twice doubled be.
 ' The paths wealth smooths for steps that stray
 alone
 ' Allure me not. My life hath no ambition,
 ' Nothing can hurt or better its condition.

XXV.

' Nought for myself do I desire, and none
 ' For what he hath I envy. Me the zest
 ' Of emulation moves not. I have known
 ' No pleasure in life's pleasant things possessed
 ' Without an effort. Oh to share, with one
 ' I loved, some common human interest!
 ' Thou know'st that England's public life is free
 ' To every man, whate'er his birth may be.

XXVI.

' Nowhere does Prejudice with Reason live
 ' On better terms; and nowhere else does wealth
 ' Give to its getter more than birth can give
 ' In thine own land, where merit, save by stealth,
 ' Without a pedigree can scarce contrive
 ' To climb to power. Now pledge me to the health
 ' Of Sir Emanuel Miller, K.C.B.
 ' Called to the future Cabinet with me!'

XXVII.

' I drink,' Emanuel answered, ' to the most
 ' Unselfish heart, the noblest nature too,
 ' In England ! And ' (he added, as he tossed
 ' His glass down) ' to the faithful friend, the true,
 ' The grateful servant of a generous host,
 ' Emanuel, son of Gottfried Müller, who,
 ' A Heidelberg licentiate, to the cure
 ' Of souls is called. Heaven keep his calling pure !

XXVIII.

' Nay, be not disappointed or surprised,
 ' Dear Ivor,' he went on, ' nor take it ill,
 ' That thy kind wish is more than realised
 ' In the delight I feel to find thee still
 ' All thou hast been. That gift is not despised
 ' Which gratitude resigns with tears that fill
 ' An overflowing heart. The slave of pride
 ' And prejudice, believe me not !' He sighed ;

XXIX.

And stretched his own to grasp Glenaveril's hand.
 ' Ah no ! the joy of pure beneficence,
 ' The blessedness of hearts that have it, and
 ' The heaven that glows in hearts whose grateful
 sense
 ' Rejoices to receive, I understand.
 ' But never unrebuked from Providence
 ' Hath man usurped the power to separate
 ' The future from the past of human fate.

XXX.

' A Will Divine hath at our birth confided
' To each of us a stringent, tho' concealed,
' Direction how our course must needs be guided
' Towards a goal that's by our growth revealed ;
' And, like the captain of a ship, provided
' Ere he sets forth to sea with orders sealed,
Life's voyager learns only in mid sea
' Both what he is, and what he is to be.

XXXI.

' The duties Heaven hath charged him with, he then
' Discovers, when he can no longer steer
' His bark, tho' storms may threaten it, again
' Back to the port he sailed from. Trust me, dear
' And honoured friend of now and always, when
' I own it cost me a prolonged, severe,
' And sorely bitter struggle to subdue
' All that once strove to prove this truth untrue ;

XXXII.

' All my youth's natural cravings ! all the wild
' And passionate promptings of a rebel heart !
' I know, too well, my nature is not mild,
' As my vocation must be. Loth to part
' With what I loved to keep, but unbeguiled,
' I have cut off my hand, and still the smart
' Lingers ; plucked out mine eyes, and still the light
' Of heaven afflicts my mutilated sight.

XXXIII.

'Thy confidence I would, but cannot, share
'In the duration of those sentiments
'Which to thy fond imagination are
'As Heaven's vicegerents, or at all events
'Its messengers, commissioned to declare
'Authentically its divine intents.
'Of all things insubordinate to will,
'The subtlest seems emotion's mystic thrill.

XXXIV.

'Tis most withdrawn from reason's rule, and so
'The most susceptible, from hour to hour,
'To all that changes with the ebb and flow
'Of that obscure incalculable power
'Men call fatality. But well I know
'The law that to the leaf allots the flower,
'And to the plant the soil, my place on earth
'Hath fastened to the race that gave me birth.

XXXV.

'Protest not ! Change is nature's common right.
'We form not our affections. It is *they*
'That do form *us*; and form us in despite
'Of our poor protests. Nothing we can say,
'Or do, will make life's temperature be quite
'The same to-morrow as it is to-day.
'The wind blows where it lists, and no man knows
'Whence the wind comes, or whither the wind goes.

XXXVI.

' Because we must, and not because we choose,
 ' We change. Let Age remember and regret
 ' The generous ardours that no more suffuse
 ' Its sober cheek ; thus honouring them yet
 ' Better than when with imitated hues
 ' Of youth, that blushing without bliss, beget
 ' Only a hypocritical grimace,
 ' It paints the wrinkles of a withered face.

XXXVII.

' If aught of thy rich heritage I may
 ' Not meanly envy, Ivor, it is still
 ' The grand device *GLENAVERIL SOIS VRAI*.
 ' When first I read the scroll those three words fill
 ' Graved on the gates of that storm-beaten, grey,
 ' Grandæval home of thine, I felt a thrill,
 ' As one to whom some voice, expected not,
 ' Recalls an order that hath been forgot.

XXXVIII.

' Oh, what sublimer than the solemn cry
 ' Of an ancestral mandate, all along
 ' The listening years transmitted from on high
 ' By ancestor to ancestor? The throng
 ' Of generations, each as it goes by,
 ' In turn reëchoes that heart-thrilling song,
 ' Which is a law to those of whose high names
 ' The duties and traditions it proclaims.

XXXIX.

' Alas ! my name is one I cannot find
 ' Among the records of events that share
 ' In shaping the conditions of mankind.
 ' My father, and my father's father, were
 ' Shepherds whose own sheep knew them : and to bind
 ' My present to their past, that I may bear
 ' Some part in the transmission of a type,
 ' Mine too must be the shepherd's crook and pipe.

XL.

' I care not—peasant, burgher, prince, or priest—
 ' Whate'er the rank assigned me, were but I
 ' A step among the reckoned steps at least
 ' Of the great ladder of Humanity.
 ' But, ere the birth of my grandfather, ceased
 ' The record of my race. In vain I try
 ' To trace three lives from mine thro' death's deep
 night,
 ' That to my search vouchsafes no gleam of light.

XLI.

' Whoe'er he was, my great-grandfather drew
 ' The ladder after him, or flung it down.
 ' The People (my progenitor) ne'er knew
 ' * Itself, nor to itself will e'er be known.
 ' It springs from, and anon subsides into,
 ' A nameless characterless crowd, whose own
 ' Existence is but a congested clot
 ' Of life, not born, but casually got.'

XLII.

'Ah,' sighed Glenaveril, with reproachful face,
'And wouldst thou rather, then, from age to age
'Reckon the grim procession of thy race
'By slaughtered corpses, strewn at every stage
'Beneath the sword or axe, to keep the trace
'Of blood unbroken down the dismal page
'Of chronicled catastrophes?' And 'Ay,'
Emanuel answered quickly, 'that would I!'

XLIII.

'I would the ladder, on whose lowest rung
'I stand upgazing thro' the dark, were propped
'Against a scaffold, whence the axe that swung
'Above my head continually dropped
'The ancestral blood from which mine own had
sprung,
'Rather than know my life's short lineage stopped,
'Annulled, expunged, beyond my power to guess
'Its cancelled source in nameless nothingness.

XLIV.

'Tis well, 'tis natural, that the grain which grows
'Along our valleys should remember not
'The Caucasus it came from. Over those
'Whose growth is reaped in one unreckoned lot,
'The recollection of lost grandeur throws
'No individual grace. 'Tis best forgot.
'But oh, that immortality should be
'The dunce of time, unable to count three!

XLV.

‘ In this loose series of existences
‘ I fain would link the future to the past,
‘ By such a life as may, at least, express
‘ Some purpose common to them both, held fast
‘ By sire and son with pious faithfulness
‘ To one pure type, the same from first to last.
‘ Still honoured doth my grandsire’s memory stand
‘ Among the theologians of our land ;

XLVI.

‘ He to a piety severe united
‘ An erudition splendid and profound,
‘ That made his name redoubtable. A lighted
‘ And lofty beacon, all the region round
‘ Its blaze illumined, rallying Faith’s benighted
‘ And straying children. ’Twas a name renowned
‘ In Lutheran Theology. Then came
‘ My father, who made loveable that name ;

XLVII.

‘ Winning to it the benedictions deep
‘ Of those whose lives his own had comforted
‘ In its short ministry. His quiet sheep
‘ On Hermon’s freshest dews the shepherd fed,
‘ Or soft, by lawns where Kedron’s wavelets sleep
‘ In sabbath sweetness lulled, their steps he led.
‘ His sermons, if I published them, would bring
‘ Fresh solace to a world of suffering.

XLVIII.

‘Have not the pages of à Kempis been
‘As often as the Bible’s self almost
‘Reprinted? I myself can count eighteen
‘Hundred editions of them. What a host
‘In one!—as many as the years between
‘The Saviour’s death and this sad age, whose boast
‘Is to save nothing, but let all die out,
‘And, doubting faith, to still put faith in doubt.

XLIX.

‘Thou seest that, even in these two lives alone,
‘I lack not some hereditary base
‘Whereon to fix and edify mine own.
‘I have the will, too, and the wish for grace
‘And strength the labours of those lives to crown.
‘But have I the vocation?’ (There his face
Darkened.) ‘St. Paul once doubted of his own.
‘What’s faith, but doubt incessantly kept down?

L.

‘Or walking, but a tendency to fall
‘Each footstep is an effort to suspend?
‘Or life itself, but death’s continual
‘Postponement? Far as Nature’s realms extend,
‘This conflict with its contrary, in all
‘That lives and acts, goes on without an end.
‘And now, my brother, my heart’s loved, and blessed,
‘First, last, and only friend,—what is, is best!

LI.

'Pledge me one toast, the sweetest, and the last,
 '*To Cæsar Cæsar's due!* For I declare
 'The Cæsar that I honour is the Past,
 'Whose empire is Remembrance. Young and fair
 'Are all the loves that live there. Time's chill blast
 'Can blight them not. Change cannot reach them
 there.
 'To them be this libation!' 'Ah, but why
 'All for the Past?' said Ivor with a sigh,

LII.

'And nothing for the Future?' 'Nay,' replied
 Emanuel, 'To the Future I concede
 'Its due—to be the Past, in turn. Decide
 'Its worth till then, who can? Not I, indeed!
 'The eldest sister was the first-wed bride
 'In Israel's family; and 'twas agreed
 'The latest married should the youngest be.'
 'O Laban, Laban!' Ivor sighed, 'to me

LIII.

'Thou givest Leah, when the bride I sought
 'Was Rachel.' 'Jacob,' laughed Emanuel,
 'Got Rachel too; and, by a lucky thought,
 'Contrived to get, along with her as well,
 'All the striped cattle.' 'They were dearly bought,'
 Said Ivor, with a half-perceptible
 Scorn in his accent, 'by a slight deceit.
 'But be it so. Myself I cannot cheat.

LIV.

' Yet, so to serve my friend as Isaac's son
 ' Served Rachel's wily father, I exact
 ' A pledge, a compact, no impossible one.'
 ' Good!' said Emanuel, ' name it, and the pact
 ' I'll sign, upon the faith of Laban.' ' Done!
 ' But this acceptance shall be better backed
 ' Than by the faith of Laban. Brother, lay
 ' Thy hand in mine. Heed well, too, what I say!'

LV.

And, as the adept adjures the neophyte,
 Glenaveril resumed. ' As sure as now
 ' I hold thy hand in mine, Emanuel, plight
 ' To me this promise, and hold fast the vow.
 ' Soon as thy studies here, completed quite,
 ' Have closed the respite I till then allow,
 ' Thou thro' the world awhile with me shalt go:
 ' My "yes" shall be thy "yes," my "no" thy "no."

LVI.

' And all this while shalt thou to me belong;
 ' But, like those comrades of the days of old,
 ' The heroes of the Niebelungen song,
 ' Who with each other in their battles bold
 ' Exchanged their arms; so, moving thro' the throng
 ' And rabble of a world that takes for gold
 ' Whatever glitters, thou my name shalt bear,
 ' I thine, and each the other's vesture wear.

LVII.

'If, after this, thou still persist in trying
'To offer Heaven to others, and to me,
'Thine earliest petitioner, denying
'That handful of poor earth I offer thee,
'I then must needs correct myself of sighing
'For a felicity that's not to be,
'And be contented with a lesser claim
'On thy regard ; which it remains to name.

LVIII.

'My marriage, when its destined hour is come,
'Thou, with due ritual done, shalt solemnize :
'My children, in the water carried home
'From Jordan by us two, shalt thou baptise :
'And if I die before thee (since by some
'Mischance, untimely, each Glenaveril dies)
'Then shalt thou bury me, where now thou hast
'Buried youth's dreams—in a remembered past.

LIX.

'Swear it !' 'Tis sworn, but comprehended not.
'Wherefore this masquerade?' 'For the salvation
'Of thy life's happiness, 'tis love's last plot.
'Emanuel, I trust not thy vocation
'To apostolic holiness. The lot
'Thy stubborn fancy deems the destination
'Of thy proud spirit, would but blight and kill
'All of thy better self that lingers still.

LX.

'Wear, for awhile, a name that represents
 'Some little portion of earth's soil possessed
 'By him that wears it; and at all events
 'Thou wilt have put thy nature to the test,
 'Roused into life its latent elements,
 'And gained a new experience. For the rest,
 'No harm befalls thee if the experiment
 'Should haply disappoint mine own intent.'

LXI.

'*Bene! præclare!*' laughed Emanuel.
 'Whoever founded the Four Faculties
 'Ought to have joined to them a fifth as well,
 'Giving to all who have taken its degrees
 'As many acres of good arable
 'Land of their own; then I, by means of these,
 'Might be a real land-owner, and not die
 'A simple Doctor of Divinity.'

LXII.

'Nay, but,' said Ivor, 'that Fifth Faculty
 'Exists already.' 'Where? In what sublime
 'Ideal University? Oh ay,
 'The University of Rudesheim!'

Emanuel answered. 'One more glass! that I
 'May graduate in it while there yet is time!'

Said Ivor, 'Its degrees need no rehearsal;
 'Its university is universal;

LXIII.

‘And Friendship is the name of it.’ ‘Well said!’
 Emanuel sighed. ‘Dear friend, the way that seems
 ‘The shortest to it is the way to bed.
 ‘Come! let us seek it in the lands of dreams.’
 And, saying this, he rose. Thick overhead
 The night was strewn with stars, the moon’s pure
 beams
 In silver panoplied the castled hill:
 Lights twinkled underneath: and all was still.

LXIV.

All but the rustling of the moonlit stream;
 For silent was the sleeping town below,
 And nothing stirred but the unquiet gleam
 Of the reflected lamps, whose ruddy glow
 Shook in the tremours of a quivering team
 Of sparkles shaken by the tide’s swift flow.
 Slowly the two friends, arm in arm enlaced,
 Along the downward-sloping pathway paced—

LXV.

Back to that fortress of Philosophy
 Where Science stores inflammatory dust,
 And yearly trains her young recruits to ply
 Keen weapons, sharpened for quick cut and thrust
 By masters of the lore of How and Why;
 Whose sapience is, to Nature’s wisdom, just
 As are the gleams from clustered candles given,
 To the far splendours of the stars of heaven.

END OF BOOK THE FIRST.

BOOK THE SECOND.

FATALITY.

CANTO I.—A LETTER.

CANTO II.—THE LETTER.

CANTO III.—AN ANSWER.

CANTO IV.—THE ANSWER.

CANTO V.—EDELRATH TO THE RESCUE.

CANTO VI.—FATE TO THE RESCUE.

BOOK THE SECOND.

CANTO I.

A LETTER.

I.

NATURE in noble characters hath pent
A depth of quiet sadness. It is not
The fretful pang of personal discontent,
But a pervading consciousness of what,
With its diffused and common element
Of suffering, fills the universal lot
Of human life. For life, in every case,
Hides 'neath a comic mask a tragic face.

II.

The grandest life is comic in detail ;
The meanest doth to penetrative eyes
Present a tragic aspect. The world's wail
Of widespread misery Chance accompanies
By incidents burlesque, that train their stale
Reiterated trivialities
Across the stage of that deep tragedy
Performed by all who live, and all who die.

III.

The daily vanities, the vile vexations,
The little pleasures, the amusements mean,
The undignified desires and irritations,
The wants so trivial yet withal so keen,
The foolish fears, the silly situations,
Of common life do, from the outside seen,
Look like a sorry farce that, out of joint,
Jerks itself on with neither plot nor point ;

IV.

Yet the stern drama they deface presents,
In progress as pathetic as can be,
A constant train of tragical events
Moving to one immense catastrophe ;
Wrecked in the storm of their own elements,
Primæval passions ; lost in their own sea
Of restless error, loves and longings vast ;
With Death to end the tragedy at last !

V.

And therefore is it that the contemplation
Of any intense grief affects the mind
With an instinctive sense of veneration,
Scarce differing either in degree or kind
From that which we experience in relation
To some transcendent virtue, when we find
Its presence unexpectedly in one
We honoured not before. Nor this alone ;

VI.

The man who without murmuring endures
Even the little sufferings of sustained
Exertion or privation (hourly cures
For the disease of self, if self-ordained)
Hath in his aspect something which allures
That sentiment our nature hath retained
Of the sublime : a sentiment that speaks
As do the cataracts to the mountain peaks.

VII.

This feeling of sublimity was blent
Rebukefully with the compassionate,
But also disapproving, sentiment
Of Ivor, when he mused upon the fate
It saddened him to find his poor friend bent
Upon embracing with a desperate
And drear devotion. Tragically grim
That comedy of errors seemed to him.

VIII.

By chance, or by design, when he related
To Eðelrath the pact Emanuel
Was pledged to carry out, he left unstated
The terms of its fantastic article
About the change of names. Perhaps it grated
On sentiments he did not care to tell,
To think his reverend monitor might fail
To quite approve this whimsical detail ;

IX.

Perhaps he had forgot it ; but a glance,
A tone, are oft sufficient to excite
In natures sensitive and quick a trance
Of sudden shyness ; and, o'erflowing quite
With fervour in his pupil's praise, by chance
Edelrath, in his rapture of delight,
Had dubbed Emanuel '*Illustrissimus*
' *Et doctus ille Molinarius !*'

X.

This fashion, by the Middle Age affected,
Of latinizing vulgar names, distressed
Glenaveril's tenderness, when he reflected
On the proud bearing and the haughty crest
Of him whose pride was by his birth subjected
To the endurance of a name at best
Common and trite ; and who, he felt convinced,
Must from the same reflection oft have winced ;

XI.

Recalling, with a pensive pang, his share
In the discussion of the night before,
He feared that he himself might, unaware,
Have jarred a nerve still sensitive and sore ;
And he recoiled, perhaps, from laying bare
The vague remorse with which he pondered o'er
The pained expression in Emanuel's eyes,
When dwelling on his own dull destinies.

XII.

The historian, who records what famous States
And kings have done, resists no better than
The simple storyteller, who relates
The life of some imaginary man,
That constant tendency which operates
On both alike, to mingle, when they can,
Fancies and suppositions of their own
With the plain statement of things said and done ;

XIII.

And this reproach, if a reproach it be,
Applies to all the reasons here set down
Upon Glenaveril's behalf, why he
Omitted to do that which, be it known,
He had no chance of doing ; for, with glee,
Edelrath, like a dog who gets a bone,
Had snapped up the word 'travels,' and it so
Entranced him that he could not let it go.

XIV.

The good Professor, who himself had ne'er
The chance enjoyed to visit or to roam
Those famous cities and far regions where
His travelled fancy had been long at home,
Was constantly on the look out, as 'twere,
For opportunities to pounce on some
Wayfarer, by whose mouth he might impart
To realms remote fresh greetings from his heart.

XV.

And forthwith, seven-league-booted, he began
His vast vicarious journey over seas
And lands. With three swift strides of giant span
He crossed Alps, Apennines, and Pyrenees ;
Europe he ransacked, Asia he o'erran,
And penetrated Africa with ease ;
Even Marco Polo would have been astounded,
And old Nearchus perfectly dumfounded !

XVI.

' *Optime !* thine itinerary, child,
' Enchants me ! ' he exclaimed ; forgetting quite
He was himself the author of that wild
And superhuman project. ' My delight
' Is but to one detail unreconciled ;
' I cannot spread my wings, and join the flight
' Of my young eaglets. But the old bird's nest
' Gives to the young ones a brief perch at best ;

XVII.

' And all that I can do is to prepare
' Thine outfit for the journey that's to be,
' While for this task some dozen days to spare,
' Before our friend goes up for his degree,
' The time vouchsafes us still. A knowledge rare
' Of Oriental languages hath he
' Acquired already ; and thou wilt, at least,
' Need no interpreter throughout the East.

XVIII.

‘The East! Ah, lucky youths, if you but knew
‘What luck is yours! It is the Holy Land
‘Of all my longings. Would that I, with you,
‘Could trace Time’s footprints o’er that sacred
strand!
‘There is the sepulchre, and cradle too,
‘Of all the dreams, the speculations, and
‘The memories of our knowledge. There began,
‘And there hath ended, the First Age of Man.

XIX.

‘That silent East, and this unquiet West,
‘Each a huge horologe appears to me;
‘The one is ever going, without rest,
‘But never going right, tho’ oft it be
‘Wound up and mended by the very best
‘And handiest craftsmen; they can ne’er agree
‘Upon the time that it should keep, and so
‘For these too fast it goes, for those too slow;

XX.

‘The other hath, in some forgotten past,
‘Stopped going, and now never goes at all;
‘The index rests upon the dial fast
‘Asleep, unwaked by the perpetual
‘Procession of the restless ages vast
‘That, round about it circling, rise and fall;
‘But each twelfth hour of Time’s recurrent flight,
‘That steadfast index needs must point aright.

XXI.

' My hope is that Emanuel, face to face
 ' With yonder visible past whose spacious sphere
 ' (Still present, there) absorbs in its embrace
 ' Creeds old and new, will cease to persevere
 ' In that mistaken view of his own case
 ' Which now is forcing on him a career
 ' Quite uncongenial to the natural bent
 ' Both of his intellect and temperament.

XXII.

' His resolution I have striven in vain
 ' To combat; and it still distresses me
 ' To think of what the world from both might gain
 ' If, in one aim united, thou and he
 ' (Thou, with thy wealth, and heart; he with his
 brain
 ' And knowledge) were but, as you should be, free
 ' To work together for its good. Alas,
 ' How seldom such conjunctions come to pass !

XXIII.

' The King of Archæology became
 ' A Catholic, the better at his ease
 ' Still to remain a Pagan. Who can blame
 ' The terms of compromises such as these,
 ' When to some genius of immortal fame,
 ' That else must needs have languished by degrees
 ' Into obscure extinction, they concede
 ' The leverage its large conceptions need ?

XXIV.

' With just that leverage, and nothing more,
 ' Winckelmann's genius lifted into light
 ' Treasures his age had never guessed before ;
 ' Without that leverage, his genius might
 ' Have been, with all its undiscovered store
 ' Of beauteous things, obliterated quite,
 ' Where birth had bound it to the wooden stool
 ' Of a starved usher in a village school ;

XXV.

' And but for Winckelmann, and but for that
 ' Hellenic tendency which he began,
 ' And to his age communicated, what
 ' Would ever have inspired thy countryman,
 ' Lord Elgin, to the deed so cavilled at
 ' Only because so envied ? Nothing can
 ' Wealth, by itself, find out ; nor Intellect,
 ' That grand discoverer, without means, effect.

XXVI.

' But to return to what I had to say'—
 (And here a packet from a desk he drew)
 ' These notes, dear Ivor, may assist thee. Nay,
 ' Take them, and, at thy leisure, look them thro'.
 ' I wrote them long ago (ah, well-a-day !)
 ' For thy grandfather, my dear friend, in view
 ' Of a long journey it was then our plan
 ' To make together over Hindustan.

XXVII.

‘ Ah, not for him, nor me, that journey ! *Dis*
 ‘ *Aliter visum !* ’ All his face aglow
 With the rejuvenating joy that is
 In talk on cherished subjects, to and fro
 The pleased old Scholar, as he murmured this,
 The chamber paced ; but paused from row to row
 Of volumes ranged, and, hovering round them, took
 Now here a paper, and now there a book ;

XXVIII.

Books, papers,—each in turn he made the text
 Of some injunction—each in turn explained ;
 Ransacked the Ramayana, and was vexed
 That his translation of it still remained
 Too incomplete to be of service ; next
 The Mahâbhârata his talk detained ;
 About Jain temples much did he impart,
 And plunged for pearls in Indo-Bactrian Art.

XXIX.

‘ Thy youth,’ he said, ‘ I would not see grow sere,
 ‘ Nor prematurely colourless and dry
 ‘ Like these old parchments, use to me makes dear,
 ‘ By poring o’er them with a joyless eye ;
 ‘ But lose not now the chance, vouchsafed thee here,
 ‘ Of glancing thro’ that golden treasury
 ‘ Of knowledge, by the patient German mind
 ‘ Stored in its silent service of mankind.

XXX.

' Our German Genius is an alpine land,
 ' Whose lofty peaks look wrapt in cloud and snow ;
 ' But spacious prospects those dim heights command,
 ' And from their seeming-sterile regions flow
 ' The great main springs whose streams, as they ex-
 pand,
 ' Refresh and fertilize the world below ;
 ' The mother of ideas is Germany,
 ' Tho' other nations her ideas apply ;

XXXI.

' From her prolific womb (their ethnic home)
 ' Flowed down the currents that have changed the
 course
 ' Of History ; from her dream-lands have come
 ' The inventions and conceptions vast, whose force
 ' Hath revolutionized the world (as some
 ' Believe, for better—and as some, for worse)
 ' Printing, Gunpowder, and the Reformation,
 ' Three revolutions, each of her creation !

XXXII.

' To the French,—talent and adaptive skill ;
 ' But to the Germans—genius, divination !
 ' Fortitude, and indomitable will
 ' Were once the gifts of England. But that nation
 ' Seems, half-hysterically, passing still
 ' Thro' some incalculable transformation ;
 ' What she will be, if she survives it, none
 ' Can yet divine ; but what she was is gone.'

XXXIII.

Thus, in confused and scattered monologue,
Here, there, and everywhere, the Scholar's mind
Bestirred itself, as a Newfoundland dog
Doth in a shipwreck all about him find
Something to do ; tho' now and then a log,
Or empty barrel, by mistake, the kind
And zealous creature brings, with loving eyes
And wagging tail, to shore as some great prize.

XXXIV.

Back to his lodging, which Emanuel shared,
Glenaveril, when this interview was o'er,
Infected by the Master's fervour, fared,
To pile with a preliminary store
Of prints and volumes, lovingly prepared
By Edelrath, shelf, table, chair, and floor ;
And, day by day, the growing pile increased,
Till, crammed in one small room, crouched half the
East.

XXXV.

Meanwhile, as folio upon folio, grew
The preparations by Glenaveril made,
Emanuel was passing in review
The forces mustered by him for parade
On that eventful field day, when he knew
That they must for inspection be displayed,
Marched past, and put to any sort of task
The Faculty's Head Quarter Staff might ask.

XXXVI.

So in the hushed forenoons, ere July skies
 Their freshness lost, or off the sparkling green
 Morn's dews were melted, from their sanctuaries
 The two friends, thro' the door ajar between,
 With saucy questions, waking pert replies,
 (Like birds that carol out of nests unseen)
 Saluted one another o'er the books
 Built high about their sedentary nooks.

XXXVII.

Antiquity, and all her terms, revived
 In their fresh joyous dialogue, and bloomed,
 And breathed ; as, when the Faëry Prince arrived,
 The Sleeping Beauty and her court resumed
 Their animated characters, and lived,
 Unconscious of the spell that had contrived
 So long to hide them in a thorny grove
 From the life-giving touch of Youth and Love.

XXXVIII.

Why doth our Age to those sweet classic tongues
 Which Time hath silenced, save at Learning's call,
 Deny the charm that for the heart belongs
 To language only when its accents fall
 From Beauty's lips in syllables like songs ?
 Why must the wit, the sentiment, and all
 The grace of Greek and Latin poets now
 Their gifts on pedagogues alone bestow ?

XXXIX.

The joyous Spirit of the Renaissance,
 When the lulled Arts and Sciences again
 From their long, leaden, mediæval trance
 Its voice awakened, did no more disdain
 Lively alliances with young Romance,
 Than doth the freshness of the Spring refrain
 From calling to its aid the song that hails
 Spring's message from the throats of nightingales :

XL.

And, with a thrill such sounds no more inspire,
 A young world, laughing thro' the ruins green
 Of its old past, responded to the lyre
 Of Horace, handled by that fair French Queen
 Whose sportive learning fanned love's rosy fire ;
 Or the sad songs of Ovid sighed between
 Her passionate lips who soothed with memories sweet
 The wounded hermit of the Paraclete.

XLI.

Thus, morn by morn, Time's well-fledged wings pursued
 Their peaceful flight with an unruffled feather ;
 And, noon by noon, the two young friends renewed
 Long, pleasant, rambles, arm in arm, together,
 By Neckar's banks, where vineyard, field, and wood
 Gleamed thro' a golden mist of windless weather ;
 Till, like the sunset, all their converse grew
 Slowly more glowing, yet more pensive too.

XLII.

One morning, when the postman to 'Milord'
His daily budget brought, of scented notes
Rose-hued, and sealed with some sweet signet-word,
Bills, begging-letters, share-lists, forms for votes,
Appeals for autographs, and all the abhorred
Swarm of small importunities that floats
Fast on the brisk wings of the penny post,
Where'er rank, wealth, or fame attracts it most ;

XLIII.

That lingering Mercury at last drew out
From the stuffed pouch, with hesitating hand,
A letter which, in deferential doubt
Or feigned surprise, mistrustfully he scanned,
Turning its fingered envelope about
Like something that is hard to understand ;
And 'With Milord's permission, this,' said he,
'For Herr Emanuel Müller seems to be ;

XLIV.

'Emanuel Müller, student ; nothing more.
'But I was told downstairs, where I asked word,
'This person lodges here—on the same floor—
'And has the honour to be with Milord.'
Ivor perused the address the letter bore ;
The name was plainly spelt, and underscored
In a fine hand, firm, delicate, and clear.
'Yes, man, Herr Müller,' he replied, 'lives here ;

XLV.

‘And it is I, be good enough to know,
‘Who have the honour, I am proud to say,
‘Of being lodged with *him*.’ With many a bow
The instructed postman bowed himself away.
Then Ivor shouted shrill ‘Ahoy ! aho !
‘You there, of the Minerva frigate, pray,
‘A rope’s end out to this dispatch-boat fling !
‘Advices for the Admiral we bring.’

XLVI.

Emanuel, o’er the Psalms of David bowed,
Conned the Shiggaion on the words of Cush
The Benjamite ; and muttered ‘*From the crowd*
‘*Of them that persecute, O save me ! Hush !*’
But Ivor still hallooed to him, more loud,
Between his hollowed hands, ‘Ahoy there !’ ‘Tush !’
The student groaned, ‘Be silent ! *Proud are they,*
‘*And “with our voice will we prevail,” they say !*’

XLVII.

‘And so saith he,’ cried Ivor, ‘who now craves
‘An envoy’s berth aboard the Admiral !
‘Ahoy ! aho ! Britannia rules the waves,
‘And Britons never, never, never shall
‘(Put that in Hebrew !) never shall be slaves !
‘Which means, in English, at thy beck and call
‘I wait no longer. Please to come and take
‘This letter, I have rescued for thy sake.’

XLVIII.

Emanuel, from his book still moving not,
 Murmured '*A refuge for the sore oppressed*
In time of trouble he will be—But what
 'Of *Labben* and *Muth Labben* is the best
 'Interpretation? Doth it mean a spot,
 'A person, or a tune?' 'It is addressed,'
 Continued Ivor—'To *Muth Labben*, ay!'
 Emanuel answered, 'But *Muth Labben*, why?'

XLIX.

'I tell thee (hang *Muth Labben*!)' Ivor cried,
 'The letter is addressed to none but thee.'
 And, vacantly, Emanuel replied
 'The letter *Jod*? The Talmudists agree
 'That letter marks'—'Semitic suicide
 'Of somebody's Teutonic sanity!'
 Glenaveril laughed. '*This* letter's marked U. S.
 'And bears Emanuel Müller, his address.'

L.

Emanuel's only audible reply
 Was, as he hugged the book upon his knees,
 '*Why do the heathen rage?*' Said Ivor, 'Why
 'Dost thou to me in Hebrew mutter these
 'Mad questions? Am I, then, a heathen, I?
 'Beware! or I will answer in Chinese;
 'For am I not translating (woe is me!)
 'The doctrine of the learned *Kung-Fou-Tse*—

LI.

'Edition Marsham—by the dismal aid
 'Of Morison's Turanian lexicon—
 'Concerning the transcendent duty laid
 'On monarchs, and their ministers, and on
 'Secretaries of Legation, and Unpaid
 'Attachés (I myself might have been one!)
 'To keep their tempers? Mine is, goodness knows,
 'Fast going; take thy letter, ere it goes!'

LII.

'In study,' said Emanuel, 'I find
 'How hard it is, even by slow degrees,
 'To approach with perfect quiet of the mind
 'Those *literæ* called *quiescibiles*.
 'In life, however, every other kind
 'Of letters I have hitherto with ease
 'Prevented from approaching *me*. Obscurity
 'Is from such plagues a merciful security!

LIII.

'I have no creditors, no love affairs,
 'I have no property of any sort,
 'Either in lands or houses, funds or shares;
 'I have no business of my own, in short;
 'So other folks to trouble me with theirs
 'No business have,—that's clear!' And, with a snort
 He slapped his Hebrew Psalter, murmuring
 'Why do the folk imagine a vain thing?'

LIV.

'The folk, whose name is, as the case may be,

'Or M. or N.,' said Ivor, 'may have meant

'Extremely well, in thus addressing thee.'

'Tis an impertinence, and I resent

'The address of that impertinence to me!'

Emanuel answered. 'A most insolent

'Intrusion, I intend not to permit!

'Take it away! I will not look at it!

LV.

'Out of my sight with it! destroy it! burn it!

'Thy meerschaum light with it! or—Ivor, stay!

'Open, and read it, thou! And then return it,

'Postage unpaid, to whence it came. But pray

'Plague me not any more with it. I spurn it!'

And, saying this, he snatched, and tossed away

The letter; then arose and slammed the door.

Glenaveril picked the letter from the floor;

LVI.

'Emanuel,' he mused, 'is capable

'Of spurning angels; and, for good or ill,

'This packet may concern him greatly. Well,

'“Read it,” he said; and, for his sake, I will!

'A legacy it may be, who can tell?

'But, even were it a protested bill,

'He could not more dishonour it. Now, then,

'Be seated, Madam M., or Mister N.!'

LVII.

He drew his chair beside the stove, and laid
The letter on his knee; and, as he eyed
The seal, 'Dear Madam, or dear Sir,' he said,
'Being just now extremely occupied
'In paying his respects to a crowned head,
'My friend requests you will to me confide
'Your visit's purpose, and permit me, too,
'To have the honour of receiving you.

LVIII.

'I may inform you confidentially
'Mr. Emanuel Müller is just now
'Waiting on His Judaic Majesty
'King David. There's an etiquette, you know,
'To be observed on such occasions. I,
'However, must request you to bestow
'On me the favour of your confidence.
'I'm all attention. Shall we now commence?'

LIX.

Then solemnly, as if he were about
Some diplomatic ceremonial,
The envelope he opened, and drew out
Some dozen pages, closely written all
In a handwriting which beyond a doubt
Proclaimed itself a woman's; fine and small
But singularly legible and neat.
About the paper breathed a perfume sweet;

LX.

Sweet, but not sickly, was that delicate scent ;
The letter was in German. He read on
With deepening interest ; and the face he bent
Above those pages as, one after one,
He laid them down, grew more and more intent ;
And in his eyes a sparkling moisture shone.
But such o'erweening length this letter ran to,
Its transcript needs must fill another Canto.



CANTO II.

THE LETTER.

I.

‘EMANUEL—’

(The letter thus began ;
And by this confidential salutation
Glenaveril was cautioned that he ran
A risk of that embarrassing sensation
Which punishes for eavesdropping the man
Who overhears a whispered conversation ;
But he was fascinated by a spell
That forced him to read on.) ‘Emanuel,

II.

‘If you, who read this writing, be the son
‘Of Gottfried Müller, and your mother’s name
‘Was Mary,—then are you the child of one
‘Who might have given your life and mine the same
‘Dear source, had Destiny not left undone
‘What she intended,—and you then can claim
‘The right to read what follows to the end :
‘If so, read on, and know your unknown friend !

III.

' The daughter, and the only child, am I
 ' Of Johann Stahl. You wonder what to you
 ' My father, or his daughter? By and by
 ' This letter will explain. In reading thro'
 ' It's until-now-unwritten history
 ' Of both our parents you will find a clue,
 ' Moreover, to the motive thought of her
 ' Who writes it, and the writer's character.

IV.

' Your mother was, like me, an only child.
 ' Her father was, like mine, a peasant born;
 ' But born with house and land, and even styled
 ' Gravely *Herr Gutsbesitzer* Haggerdorn.
 ' Great was the old man's thrift; good fortune smiled
 ' Upon it, and his barns were filled with corn.
 ' My father was his head-man, and your mother
 ' The heiress of his wealth. They loved each other.

V.

' It seems, however, that in marriage what
 ' The German Peasantry assume to be
 ' The measure of equality, is not
 ' Birth, age, or character, but the degree
 ' In which the notaries to both sides allot
 ' Reciprocal increase of property:
 ' And so by your grandfather Haggerdorn
 ' My father's love-suit was dismissed with scorn.

VI.

‘For this, the affianced lovers had provided ;
 ‘Twas a contingency foreseen, no doubt.
‘Sure of her heart, in whom his own confided,
 ‘My father, full of strength and hope, set out
‘To seek this Land of Promise ; whither, guided
 ‘By zeal like his, from all shores flock the stout
‘Strong-armed adventurers who create its grand
‘Knight Errantry of Labour’s pilgrim band.

VII.

‘But, on the eve of joining that crusade,
 ‘To his affianced, tho’ forbidden, bride,
“Wait for me, Sweetheart, five full years,” he said ;
 “ No longer time I ask for, to provide
“All that thy father claims ; for a clear head
 “ And a strong heart have never failed when tried
“In a fair field, and three fast friends have I,
“Fortitude, Temperance, and Constancy.

VIII.

“ If in that time I come not back, then give
 “ No heed more to the past, and me ; for nought
“ Save death can keep me from thee when those five
 “ Clear titles to thy hand have all been bought.
“ Think of me then as one no more alive ;
 “ But promise now that no disconsolate thought,
“ No hankering vain devotion to the dead,
“ Shall keep thy youth, for my poor sake, unwed.”

IX.

'Your mother's tenderness' recoiled before
 'This second promise with a natural shock.
"Nay," said my father, "I will shut no door
 "Mine own hand is unable to unlock ;
"My faith to thine, till life's last hour is o'er,
 "Will cling as clings the anchor to the rock ;
"But in God's hand my life is, not mine own ;
"And the world ends not when the sun goes down.

X.

"Thy father hath the right to wish thee wed,
 "For he is old. An equal right hast thou
"To wait unwedded till this term be sped,
 "For thou art young. And mine the right, I
 know,
"To claim thy faith till I have forfeited
 "By failure, or by death, our plighted vow,
"For 'tis my life that to my love I give ;
"But the gift ceases, if I cease to live."

XI.

'To these conditions Mary's father made
 'No opposition. "Go, my lad ! with thee
"Thyself no fault have I to find," he said ;
 " 'Tis but thy pockets that too empty be.
"Go, fill them, if thou canst ! I'm not afraid
 " My girl will miss her chance ; her choice rests
 free
"To wait or wed, but beetroots left alone
"Seed fast, and so do girls, and Mary's one.

XII.

“ However, that is thine affair, not mine.
“ Good luck go with thee ! ” And my father went.
‘ Twas not to luck he looked, but the divine
‘ Protection of a Power Omnipotent ;
‘ The harmony with what seemed Heaven’s design
‘ Of his own honest purpose, and the bent
‘ Impressed by steadfast will, not fleeting chance,
‘ On the long tendencies of circumstance.

XIII.

‘ In dim penurious toil beyond the seas
‘ The first two years of his new life were passed.
‘ Sterile they seemed ; but at the end of these,
‘ From daily savings painfully amassed,
‘ He had collected by minute degrees
‘ A sum, not large, but large enough at last
‘ For the cheap purchase of a tract of land
‘ In the Far West, half jungle and half sand.

XIV.

‘ To clear the thicket, and to cleanse the soil,
‘ Only three simple implements had he,
‘ A hatchet, spade, and plough ; but, with a toil
‘ Robust, so sturdily he plied all three
‘ That nothing their united force could foil ;
‘ And that choked wilderness began to be,
‘ About the fifth year’s end, an opening Horn
‘ Of Plenty. Then he wrote to Haggerdorn.

XV.

‘In what he wrote his love’s renewed demand
‘By legal documents was fortified.
‘The estimated value of his land
‘Surpassed the wealth of Haggerdorn, whose pride
‘Five years before had deemed his daughter’s hand
‘A prize too rich for Johann Stahl. His bride
‘The same post also blessed with a glad note,
‘The sole love letter that he ever wrote.

XVI.

‘These letters were by Haggerdorn received
‘With livelier welcome than they might have been
‘But for a trouble they in part relieved ;
‘A trouble he essayed with cheerful mien
‘To hide from all around him, but which grieved
‘His heart, and mortified his pride, with keen
‘Tho’ secret apprehension of disgrace ;
‘A change in his affairs had taken place.

XVII.

‘The old man had, from avarice no doubt,
‘Never insured his property. The year
‘My father went away, a fire broke out
‘Upon his farm. His losses were severe,
‘Spiteful reports of them were put about,
‘Which so incensed him, when they reached his ear,
‘That house and farmstead he must needs restore
‘Upon a scale far grander than before.

XVIII.

‘ For this, he had to borrow at high rates.
‘ Then failed the harvest he had reckoned on ;
‘ The failure put him in such narrow straits
‘ That many of his best fields, one by one,
‘ And more than half his stock, to meet the dates
‘ Of bills against him, he was forced anon
‘ To part with at low prices, and renew
‘ Fresh mortgages upon the residue.

XIX.

‘ And every time he was constrained to part
‘ With field or flock, the old man felt as tho’
‘ A drop of blood were wrung from his own heart.
‘ With each drop gone, his body seemed to grow
‘ More feeble, while his temper grew more tart.
‘ Like one who smarts and winces, bleeding slow
‘ To death, from inward wounds no probe can find,
‘ No science staunch, the miser peaked and pined.

XX.

‘ My father’s letter suddenly revived
‘ His sinking spirit. For he mused, “ ’Tis well !
‘ “ My future son-in-law will have arrived
‘ “ In time to save me. Johann Stahl must sell
‘ “ The American estate he had contrived
‘ “ To render, if the truth his papers tell,
‘ “ Worth more than all I owe, and all I’ve lost.
‘ “ I know the man. He will not grudge the cost.

XXI.

‘“ My daughter’s hand will be his recompense.
‘“ The product of the sale of Stahl’s estate
‘“ Will more than rescue mine. A few months hence
‘“ The torments that have tortured me of late
‘“ Will seem like dreams that on the waking sense
‘“ Leave no impression. Nothing but ill fate
‘“ Since Stahl went from us have I known, and he
‘“ (God bless him !) shall again my right hand be.”

XXII.

‘ And Haggerdorn, who had refused to pay
‘ A stiver to the cost of a canal
‘ Thro’ his own Commune, flung bank-notes away
‘ In getting now intelligence from all
‘ The German ports, nor grudged the price each day
‘ Of special messages. For Johann Stahl
‘ Had in his letter mentioned that he meant
‘ To take his passage in the *Orient*.

XXIII.

‘ The time wherein a steamboat ought to reach
‘ Bremen from Boston was long past, and yet
‘ (As restless as a sea-gull on the beach)
‘ Day after day the Mercantile Gazette
‘ He vainly conned, vainly examined each
‘ Last shipping list ; no tidings could he get !
‘ Except of a cyclone in the Atlantic,
‘ Reported with a calm that drove him frantic.

XXIV.

' His agitation daily greater grew ;
 ' His daughter watched it with a wondering fear ;
 ' The selfish cause of it she neither knew
 ' Nor guessed. One correspondent wrote—"*We hear*
 ' "*The 'Neptune,' ten days after she was due,*
 ' "*Arrived in port much injured. Gales severe*
 ' "*Off Newfoundland."* And this, another sent,
 ' "*Fears entertained about the 'Orient.'*"

XXV.

' Nothing of these reports did Mary see :
 ' All that she saw was the effect of them,
 ' Which troubled and perplexed her. But, since she
 ' Was ignorant, she was happy. Pride in him
 ' She loved, and the delicious hope to be
 ' His wife ere long, filled to its quiet brim
 ' Her life's unshaken cup,—till a shrill scream
 ' Waked her, one morning, from love's last sweet
 dream :

XXVI.

' A scream of wrath, and terror, and despair,
 ' And then the dull sound of a heavy fall !
 ' The noise came from her father's chamber. There,
 ' Stretched on the floor insensible, and all
 ' Convulsed, she found him fallen from his chair.
 ' His head had struck the wainscot ; and the wall
 ' Dripped with the blood that from his forehead
 gushed ;
 ' His clenched right hand a crumpled paper crushed.

XXVII.

'She raised the old man gently from the ground,
'Bore him, a hideous ruin, to his bed,
'Moistened his lips, and bathed his bleeding wound,
'And thanked God that her father was not dead.
'His eyes at length he oped, gazed fiercely round,
'And, with a horrible oath, "The thief!" he said,
'"The rogue! the rascal! he hath ruined me!
'"Gone (curse him!) to the bottom of the sea!"

XXVIII.

'Emanuel, have you heard all this before?
'If not, O, more than ever until now,
'With reverential piety adore
'Her whose last martyrdom gave life to you!
'I, whom you know not yet, know all she bore
'And suffered, and so venerate all I know,
'That nightly, in its prayers for those I love,
'My heart invokes her blessing from above.

XXIX.

'Her lover's death she learned, Emanuel,
'By the abominable blasphemies
'That from her father's lips in frenzy fell.
'The strength that madness to the mad supplies,
'For their own torment, in its ruined shell
'Sustained, to aggravate her miseries,
'The spirit of that terrible old man;
'Twas then her life's long martyrdom began.

XXX.

‘ In helpless imbecility, made worse
‘ By fits of murderous fury, he whose pride
‘ And avarice had been his daughter’s curse
‘ Lived tended by her, shunned by all beside,
‘ A brute with human frame ! She was his nurse,
‘ His guardian, and his victim, till he died ;
‘ And all thro’ that drear time, sole comforter,
‘ Sole friend, your sainted father was to her.

XXXI.

‘ For Gottfried Müller, just ere this last stage
‘ Of Haggerdorn’s misfortunes, had arrived
‘ (Its new incumbent) at the Vicarage
‘ Of Sonnenthal, where Mary’s father lived ;
‘ And, in his saintly efforts to assuage
‘ The sins and sorrows of the souls he shrived,
‘ Your mother’s spirit stood revealed to him
‘ Fair as the sanctuaried Seraphim.

XXXII.

‘ His character, and that of his vocation,
‘ Both pure, permitted him without restraint
‘ To enter into close communication
‘ With one whom others shrank from. He, the saint,
‘ And she, the martyr, knew by divination
‘ That upon each earth’s hold was far too faint
‘ For vulgar joys. Her love, with broken wing,
‘ Still round its ruined past crept fluttering ;

XXXIII.

‘ His, whose deep tenderness was fain to share
‘ Love given to another, brooded o’er
‘ That storm-struck nest, and strove to comfort there
‘ With sheltering pinion its crushed hopes, or bore
‘ Heavenward, in silent flights of pitying prayer,
‘ Longings that had not at their inmost core
‘ One selfish thought. Else, utterly forlorn
‘ Was the wrecked life of Mary Haggerdorn.

XXXIV.

‘ And Gottfried, for her sake, tried every plan
‘ To elucidate the little that was known
‘ About the *Orient*. The rumour ran
‘ That she, with all on board, must have gone down ;
‘ For three days after she left port began
‘ The great cyclone. The *Siren* in her own
‘ Home voyage had picked up some casks that bore
‘ The lost ship’s brand. But he could learn no more.

XXXV.

‘ Years had gone by, and no survivor named.
‘ That Johann Stahl had perished with the rest,
‘ His German kinsmen were convinced. They claimed
‘ The land that he had purchased in the West ;
‘ And, under the Judicial Order framed
‘ On their appeal, whatever he possessed
‘ Was sold. The proceeds were distributed
‘ Between three distant cousins of the dead.

XXXVI.

' When your grandfather died at last, of all
' His former wealth the little that remained
' Scarce paid the expenses of his burial ;
' And, when his creditors had each obtained
' What the law gave them out of the last stall
' And cowshed sold upon their suit, it strained
' Their conscience that his daughter was permitted
' A week's delay ere her lost home she quitted.

XXXVII.

' Then was it that your generous father came
' And with an eloquent compassion pressèd
' The shelter of his hand, his house, his name,
' On his else friendless friend. The last request
' Of Johann Stahl enforced your father's claim
' Upon your mother's life. You know the rest.
' But seems it strange that one unknown to you
' Should know so much that not till now you knew ?

XXXVIII.

' Ah, dear Emanuel, you will wonder not
' Had you but known, as he was known to me,
' The man who from afar hath o'er your lot
' Watched with an unseen eye ! But let that be.
' Question not yet ! I have but half-way got
' Thro' the long tale that must be told to free
' The soul of her who tells it from a spell
' Strong as the grave. Much still remains to tell ;

XXXIX.

‘And, first of all, what miracle it was
 ‘That saved my father’s life : and why it proved
 ‘The means of still preventing him, alas,
 ‘From making his life known to those he loved :
 ‘And how it hath not sooner come to pass
 ‘That you have heard his name, or I been moved
 ‘To write what now you read. The *Orient*,
 ‘Down in mid seas, with all on board her, went :

XI..

‘But, in that moment’s agony, one man
 ‘Was not on board her. All her bulwarks gone
 ‘And engines swamped, before the wind she ran,
 ‘Struck every moment by the strong cyclone
 ‘Like a cracked nutshell. Just as she began
 ‘To sink, my father (then the only one
 ‘Of all the passengers not deaf with fear)
 ‘Heard, thro’ the storm, the Captain’s voice shout
 “Clear—!”

XLI.

‘The rest he heard not ; but, unheard, divined ;
 ‘And, snatching up a hatchet that his hand
 ‘Close to him in that chaos chanced to find,
 ‘He strove to clear the rigging. The command,
 ‘His instinct caught at, in the roaring wind
 ‘Had fall’n unheeded ; but a little band
 ‘That marked his action, and its purpose guessed,
 ‘Around him, eager to the service, pressed.

XLII.

' Fast overboard fell crashing, spar, and mast,
' And sail, and cordage. From their weight relieved,
' With a resurgent spasm of life the vast
' Dismantled hull out of the abyss upheaved
' Its wallowing bulk, and leapt and bounded fast
' Upon the enormous billows. He perceived
' The staggering mass upon their crests uplifted
' Above the hissing trough down which he drifted ;

XLIII.

' For, tangled in the tackle as it fell,
' My father, as if clutched down by the claw
' Of some huge devilfish, into that hell
' Of hollow sea was swept ; and thence he saw
' The ship's black carcass hovering horrible,
' Down-slanted over its foam-spattered maw ;
' A coffin hung above an open grave,
' Across a crumbling precipice of wave !

XLIV.

' The next wild moment he, in turn, was gazing
' From the swift upswell down upon the ship ;
' And for awhile, now sinking and now raising
' Its victims, with alternate heave and dip
' The awful sea-saw played. At times, the dazing
' Leven in livid gashes seemed to rip
' The storm's heart open, and then all again
' Was one wide roaring darkness lashed with rain.

XLV.

'As those quick fits of fire the scene embraced,
'He saw the men from whom his fate was severed
'Lowering the boats, and manning them in haste.
'He shouted, but they heard not. The storm
shivered
'All voices save its own. About his waist
'He wound a rope that floated, and endeavoured
'To use it as a life-belt, which at last
'He fixed with effort to a floating mast.

XLVI.

'Thus buoyed, his hope was that perchance some one
'Of the ship's boats (which, crowded to the brim
'With women, eager hands had just begun
'To lower down) might pass and rescue him :
'But the huge-shouldered wave that rolled him on
'Hid all things in its white spray, smoking dim,
'For one blind moment ; and, before that passed,
'He heard a sound more fearful than the blast :

XLVII.

'From all the mingled screams of wave, and wind,
'And rain, and thunder, he distinguished it :
'It was a human cry. He gazed behind :
'The sudden-streaming lightning swathed and lit
'An apparition never from his mind
'In after years effaced. The ship was split
'Into two shrieking wrecks, asunder tossed ;
'Each filled with lives whose last wild hope was lost !

XLVIII.

'Lost ! for, the moment after, from his sight
 ' The wrecks, the boats, the shuddering crowds,
 the whole
 ' Appalling vision vanished. All that night,
 ' While the storm swept him to his unknown goal,
 ' He ceased not shouting, in the hope he might
 ' Make known, perchance, to some poor drowning
 soul
 ' The one weak chance of life prolonged, that still
 ' Sustained his own indomitable will ;

XLIX.

' But to his shouts no answer came. Ere morn
 ' The cold, the effort, and the agony
 ' Of this tremendous trial had nigh worn
 ' From his numbed limbs life's last faint pulse.
 The sky,
 ' The sea, both gleamed with sallow lights forlorn,
 ' The water had grown warm insensibly,
 ' For he was drifting in the great Gulf Stream.
 ' Near noon he seemed to wake from some fierce dream ;

L.

' Faint, but still conscious. Faint the storm was too,
 ' And down the sullen ocean's ravaged floor
 ' It tottered feebly, like an athlete who,
 ' The last to leave the arena, staggers o'er
 ' The tumbled corpses that his passage strew,
 ' Bleeding to death himself. A scattered store
 ' Of casks, and chests, and planks, came floating past
 ' That lone man clinging to his broken mast.

LI.

‘ And, as my father’s senses by degrees
‘ Their energy recovered, he untied
‘ His moorings to the mast; and after these
‘ Unhoped-for treasures swam. Ere daylight died
‘ (With not a ship upon those shoreless seas !)
‘ He had contrived, by fastening side to side
‘ Barrels, and chests, and planks, to make a kind
‘ Of clumsy raft, that went before the wind.

LII.

‘ Then, having desperately done all this,
‘ Exhausted down upon his wooden isle
‘ He sank, and slept. As deep as the abyss
‘ Around him was that sleep. How long a while
‘ It lasted he could never tell.—

It is

‘ Pleasant enough vague fancies to beguile
‘ With tales of shipwreck, conned by candlelight
‘ At the snug hearth, in some wild windy night !

LIII.

‘ Have they not charmed us all, Emanuel,
‘ Those tales that made our childhood long to be
‘ Shipwrecked itself, that we might haply dwell
‘ On manless islands in a shipless sea,
‘ Where Chance invariably favours well
‘ Each Crusoe’s comfortable Odyssey ?
‘ Sweet all the springs there, wholesome all the fruits,
‘ And full of friendliness the very brutes !

LIV.

' But churlish is Reality ; nor grants
' The smallest comforts save to effort rude.
' My father was a Crusoe to whose wants
' The sea vouchsafed no beauteous solitude
' Embowered by tamarind trees, and tropic plants ;
' But a few planks and casks, not even screwed
' Together, which the slopping brine washed bare ;
' And scanty as his lodging was his fare.

LV.

' Some gallons of sweet water in a cask
' That floated, being only partly filled,
' He found, and firmly lashed (no easy task !)
' To the rude raft he had contrived to build
' Out of the other wreckage. In his flask
' There was a little brandy left ; and, thrilled
' With thankfulness, in one else-empty box
' He found a sack of biscuits hard as rocks ;

LVI.

' And this was all. But 'twas enough. The fear
' Of death by hunger he was spared. The sea
' Was windless now, and soft the atmosphere.
' Lone on his little floating island, he
' Lived on. Time was not. Only space. And here,
' Lost in the universe, he seemed to be
' Himself no more. Nor anyone at all !
' His thought became un-individual.

LVII.

‘ Often my father in his after life
‘ Undaunted face to face with danger stood :
‘ Once did he brave in single-handed strife
‘ That mad bloodthirsty beast, the Multitude ;
‘ And by the Red Man, with his scalping knife,
‘ Thrice was his perilous lone flight pursued
‘ Thro’ thickets where the wanderer fears to wake
‘ At each next step the sleeping rattlesnake ;

LVIII.

‘ But never, never, I have heard him say,
‘ Was his soul’s fortitude so fiercely tried
‘ As by that long inactive duel, day
‘ By day, and hour by hour, unheard, uneyed,
‘ Waged between Madness and its unarmed prey
‘ In silence horrible. Tho’ still supplied
‘ With food, the body (weaker than the mind)
‘ Sunk first, and into lethargy declined.

LIX.

‘ One morn, above the horizon rose a sail,
‘ That slowly greatened. It was Hope’s white wing
‘ Watched by unhopeful eyes. Too weak to hail
‘ (By any signal that might serve to bring
‘ His misery to man’s notice) that faint, pale,
‘ Last chance of life, he watched it hovering
‘ Far off, as if to him it mattered not ;
‘ So loosened was his thought from his own lot !

LX.

' But nearer drew the ship. Her name, the *Seal*.
' She was a Greenland Whaler, on her way
' To the north seas. Rough hands, with tender zeal,
' Rescued the half-dead man. For weeks he lay
' Unthankful for a change he could not feel,
' For consciousness had nearly killed its prey ;
' But in the stricken frame life's spark still hovered,
' And slowly the strong man his strength recovered.

LXI.

' Meanwhile the ship sped on. The care bestowed
' Upon my father had a twofold cause ;
' 'Twas not to pity only that he owed
' His long, slow, patient rescue from Death's jaws.
' The crew was short of hands. The Captain's code
' Was "Give and Take." He went by those two laws.
' Much had he marvelled at the handicraft
' And skill betokened by my father's raft ;

LXII.

' And to its saved artificer he said
' " Look ye, my lad ! and recollect that one
' " Good turn deserves another. Not yet paid
' " Thy passage is, but it is not yet done.
' " Listen to me, and hang not so thy head !
' " Next week will see us in the frozen zone ;
' " Nor shall we now for some twelve months or so
' " Sight land. Meanwhile, what is it thou canst do ?

LXIII.

‘ “ My carpenter fell sick at Halifax,
 ‘ “ And there we left him. I have given thee back
 ‘ “ The strength that should (unless the good will
 lacks)
 ‘ “ Supply his place. We’ll teach thee how to crack
 ‘ “ An iceberg, how to handle a ship’s axe,
 ‘ “ How to harpoon a whale. Go, learn the knack,
 ‘ “ And earn thy wage ! ” My father was resigned.
 ‘ He lived, but all his life was left behind.

LXIV.

‘ With knowledge, his heart’s wretchedness revived.
 ‘ He knew himself now numbered with the dead ;
 ‘ And to know this and nothing more, he lived.
 ‘ Lived, then, for what ? Ah, not till life is fled
 ‘ Flies hope ! And hope to flatter life contrived,
 ‘ Painting the future with a sweetness shed
 ‘ On its blank starless forehead from the last
 ‘ Dim golden glimpses of the sunken past.

LXV.

‘ It was God’s will that he should live ; and he
 ‘ Had ever looked on life as given to man
 ‘ God’s will to do. He soon had learned to be
 ‘ A dexterous seaman, foremost in the van
 ‘ Of each adventure o’er that frozen sea.
 ‘ At last the *Seal* sailed home. And now began
 ‘ The consummation of my father’s fate,
 ‘ The misery of that bitter word Too-Late !

LXVI.

' A packet-boat was just departing, bound
' For Liverpool, the day the *Seal* at last
' Reached Halifax. A berth my father found
' On board her, paid by work before the mast :
' Then sailed to Antwerp : thence, reached German
ground
' Footsore, on foot : to his own village passed,
' An obscure wanderer recognised by none :
' There—knew, unknown ; and groaned " God's will
be done ! "

LXVII.

' By night, he crept beneath the vicarage wall,
' And thro' the casement gazed upon that hearth
' Not his, tho' hers. Another now owned all
' That had for him made up the whole wide earth.
' He saw his doom, and knew it past recall.
' This was the end ! For this with danger, dearth,
' Death, madness, and soul-sickening solitude,
' His life and love had striven unsubdued !

LXVIII.

' He saw her. Saw her bending her dear face
' Over the poor sick child upon her knee.
That face had in it the pathetic grace
' Of grief and motherhood. His heart could see,
' Thro' eyes half blind with tears unshed, the trace
' Of all that she had suffered. Dignity,
' And resignation, and sad tenderness,
' Breathed from each soft fold of her quiet dress.

LXIX.

' The lamp shone full upon your father's head.
 ' That, too, was bowed. Upon the table lay
 ' An open book, and from the book he read
 ' Aloud to her. The listener heard him say
 ' "*Suffer the little children to be led*
 ' "*To me, whose kingdom is of such as they!*"
 ' And Gottfried noticed not, but Johann Stahl }
 ' Could see, that Mary wept. And that was all.

LXX.

' No, not quite all! For in one threefold prayer
 ' Love, for a moment, joined this severed three:—
 ' The two, who knew not who was watching there,
 ' And praying with them, as they prayed; and he,
 ' The third, who only knew his unknown share
 ' In that night's grief well known to Heaven would
 be.
 ' For one about to die, the living prayed:
 ' And, for the living, one to them now dead.

LXXI.

' All that remains to tell you is soon told.
 ' My father to America returned.
 ' The Western Farm, his German heirs had sold,
 ' Never did he reclaim. Once more he earned
 ' By daily work his living as of old.
 ' But Fortune now, as if her conscience yearned
 ' To compensate the wrong that she had done,
 ' Heaped wealth unvalued on her wounded son.

LXXII.

' He, with his savings, wandered further west :
 ' Bought land : found coal : from coal to copper
 passed.
 ' The riches that in mines he soon possessed
 ' Grew more and more. From Industry at last
 ' His enterprise to Commerce he addressed.
 ' His genius and activity were vast,
 ' So was his wealth ; starved multitudes it fed,
 ' And even the stones it touched were turned to bread.

LXXIII.

' To Halifax a stranger came one day,
 ' Enquiring for the *Seal*. She was in port.
 ' The stranger found her Captain, now grown grey,
 ' And to the good man put this question short—
 ' " How would you like to be the partner, say,
 ' " Or managing head, or something of that sort,
 ' " In charge of all the mercantile marine
 ' " Of Stahl and Company's West Indian Line?"

LXXIV.

' Gruffly the Captain answered " Tell me how
 ' " Would *you* like, Mr. What's-your-name, to be
 ' " King of Morocco? What I'd like to know
 ' " Is who are you, sir!" " I, sir, am," said he,
 ' " One, Johann Stahl, whose name you've heard ere
 now,
 ' " Head of the Firm of Stahl and Company."
 ' Out of his mouth his quid the Captain took,
 ' And stroked his head, with a bewildered look.

LXXV.

‘ At length he stammered, “ Is this serious, Sir ? ”
 “ Perfectly serious,” said the stranger. “ Then
 “ You offer me,” he said, “ what wealthier
 “ And vastly better educated men
 “ Have coveted in vain. But why confer
 “ (Excuse the question !) thus unasked for, when
 “ My betters would have begged for it, this crown
 “ On a poor skipper you have never known ? ”

LXXVI.

“ Friend,” said the stranger, “ for two reasons. First
 “ Because I want a man that I can trust ;
 “ And next, because I know you.” “ Ha ! ” outburst
 The Captain, “ Can it be, then ?—nay, it must—
 “ And yet—and yet—Heaven bless us ! if I durst
 “ Believe mine eyes, mate, why thy face is ”—“ Just
 “ Grown a bit older,” said my father, “ true !
 “ The same thing, friend, to thine hath happened too.”

LXXVII.

‘ Emanuel, as you read this, to your sense
 ‘ Doth it some general idea convey
 ‘ Of the incomparable benevolence
 ‘ Of him who might have been your father, say ?
 ‘ And can you wonder at the reverence,
 ‘ The love, that to his memory she must pay
 ‘ Who is his daughter ? “ Ah,” perchance you sigh,
 “ His daughter ? so much, then, for memory !

LXXVIII.

‘“ He married ! he forgot ! he was consoled ! ”
 ‘ He married, yes. But, marrying, nor forgot,
 ‘ Nor yet betrayed, the past. Could I unfold
 ‘ That record of his still mysterious lot,
 ‘ You would—But ’tis a tale that must be told
 ‘ Hereafter. In this place it matters not ;
 ‘ Enough that you should know that not unknown
 ‘ To him—what here concerns yourself alone—

LXXIX.

‘ Your mother’s death, your own sad orphaned life !
 ‘ He, being married, wished to give to you
 ‘ What could be given only thro’ his wife ;
 ‘ All that a father and a mother too
 ‘ Can give their child—a fond home, peace in strife,
 ‘ Comfort in care, domestic sweetness, true
 ‘ And tender love. But all this, fate denied ;
 ‘ For, in my second year, my mother died ;

LXXX.

‘ And then, no home, no family, had he ;
 ‘ Only an infant daughter. Not enough
 ‘ To realize that dream ! But cautiously
 ‘ Your Aunt he sounded, by a letter. Rough,
 ‘ Short, and decisive, was the answer she
 ‘ His letter gave ; and after this rebuff
 ‘ He waited, confident that, if God’s will
 ‘ Ordained it, all he wished would happen still,

LXXXI.

‘And Heaven would then together bring us two
‘In its own way. That was my father’s dream.
‘“Emanuel,” he said, (For you must know
‘You were his constant thought, his daily theme,
‘And still we ever thought and spoke of you
‘As of our own) “Emanuel does not seem
‘“To want immediate aid, nor yet is he
‘“Called to decide what his career shall be :

LXXXII.

‘“When he hath done his studies, we will go
‘“Together back to Germany ; and there
‘“I from himself his character shall know.
‘“Since not mine own hath been the wished-for care
‘“Of his young years, more cautious, and more slow,
‘“Must be the judgment that, in him, I dare.
‘“But if Emanuel like his mother be
‘“In heart and spirit, as art thou like me,

LXXXIII.

‘“Then,—then,—O Mary, from thy home in Heaven
‘“Look down and bless our children upon earth !
‘“And in the union to their young lives given
‘“May our lost happiness be found—our hearth,
‘“Tho’ thunder-stricken by the pitiless leaven,
‘“Rebuilt and blest by those who from their birth
‘“Thy love, and my love, have inherited,
‘“So, thro’ the living, to unite the dead !”

LXXXIV.

‘ Emanuel, my father is no more ;
‘ But in his daughter’s heart survives his own.
‘ When a young girl thus opens hers before
‘ A man to whom she is herself unknown,
‘ Can his, to whom she lays it bare, ignore,
‘ Mistrust, or misinterpret, what alone
‘ Could move her, after long deliberation,
‘ To run the risk of such a revelation ?

LXXXV.

‘ I know not. The Unusual, I know,
‘ Must always seem the Inadmissible ;
‘ And, in a woman’s conduct, rightly so !
‘ Yet do I think that you, Emanuel,
‘ Whatever with this letter you may do,
‘ Will not misunderstand its motive. Well
‘ And honestly, at least, whatever be
‘ The issue, shall its pages speak for me.

LXXXVI.

‘ I cannot carry out my father’s plan
‘ On our behalf with all the prudent pains
‘ Which he alone could give it. But I can,
‘ And will, at least, in all that yet remains
‘ (So may my record end as it began !)
‘ Replace them with a frankness that disdains
‘ The unworthy fear lest what is pure and good
‘ Be by the good and pure misunderstood.

LXXXVII.

' I am what many call, and deem, I know,
 ' Both superstitious and romantic. These
 ' Are qualities I do not disavow ;
 ' Only, myself, I give such qualities
 ' Another name. I call them Faith. And now
 ' If more of me you'd learn, upon the keys
 ' Of all my character your touch is set.
 ' I have not ever loved, nor love I yet.

LXXXVIII.

' All that I know is, I shall love some day ;
 ' Whene'er I love, my love my life will be ;
 ' And if, not having loved, I dare to say
 ' That well I know what love is, not to me
 ' This knowledge came from reading of it,—nay,
 ' Nor from what round me in the world I see.
 ' I know it from my father's life, that never
 ' Ceased loving. *Love for once is love forever !*

LXXXIX.

' But, if to love, then, there can be no end,
 ' Can there to love be a beginning? No !
 ' The love whereto your life and mine must tend
 ' Was, in *their* lives to whom our own we owe,
 ' First living, ere we lived ourselves ! O friend,
 ' Do you not feel that it must needs be so ?
 ' Ah yes, I doubt not this you feel with me,
 ' Or else your mother's son you would not be !

XC.

'For she, who could inspire a love so great
'That in the soul of one who knew her not
'It had the power to perpetuate
'Its influence, merely from the sight of what
'Such love avails to brighten, elevate,
'And beautify life's darkest lowliest lot,
'Cannot have borne a child whose heart and head
'Of all in hers are disinherited.

XCI.

'Yet must repugnances and doubts arise,
'Scruples, misgivings. That is natural.
'I could not wish such feelings otherwise;
'My heart divines, and understands, them all;
'And with them all, too, doth it sympathise.
'One difficulty rests, nor is it small;
'It happens I am rich, and you are poor;
'A circumstance for which you see no cure;

XCII.

'Yet cure there is. No noble-minded man
'Would care to owe his fortune to his wife.
'How well I understand that! For what can
'Make love by love more doubted, life to life
'Less equal, than such debts? My father's plan,
'However, spared us both what else were rife
'With love's disturbance. Ours at rest may be;
'You will not owe a single cent to me.

XCIII.

‘ That plan was to bequeath you half of all
‘ His fortune, happen then what happen might.
‘ His aim in this was unconditional;
‘ Only, he waited first to read aright
‘ With his own eyes the face he loved to call
‘ “ Our dear Emanuel’s.” And death, that quite
‘ Unaltered found my father’s resolution,
‘ Hath but to me transferred its execution.

XCIV.

‘ And now, Amen ! I have spoken. Answer you !
‘ Write to me honestly, Emanuel,
‘ As I to you have written, and be true
‘ And open with mine openness. Farewell !
‘ Direct C. S. Put on your letter too
‘ *Poste Restante*, Hamburg. In that city dwell
‘ Those who on my instructions act, and they
‘ Will send it on to me.

‘ CORDELIA.’

CANTO III.

AN ANSWER.

I.

ABRUPT the letter closed, as it began.
Out of a long delicious reverie.
Glenaveril wakened slowly like a man
Who, having slept in Elfland, seems to see,
Receding from his vision, thro' a wan
And wavering splendour, forms that, as they flee
Faint and far off, still smile to one another.
'Poor mother!' he sighed dreamily, 'poor mother!'

II.

His lips, as o'er them softly fled those
Low-whispered words, were thrilled invisibly
By some new feeling, as the grass that grows
Upon an infant's grave, (tho' not a sigh
Of summer air from the loose bramble rose
One petal shakes) might heave, unconscious why,
When slipping thro' its osiered cradle green
The little newborn angel soars unseen.

III.

The Imagination (that fine atmosphere
Wherein souls breathe) is charged with vapours
light,
That, rapid as a mist upon a mere,
About the world around us weave their slight
Sweet veil : and, tho' it seem so thin and clear,
That veil impenetrably from our sight
Obliterates the world of real things,
While a new world emerges from its wings :

IV.

A world with visions thronged, that overthrow
All our fixed notions of the evident
And possible : their fluctuations show
No trace of effort in the accomplishment
Of the most complicated schemes ; but flow
In self-fulfilment smooth from one event
On to the next : what is, and what's to be,
As one thing and the same we seem to see :

v.

The slow and painful process of long years
A single moment supersedes : between
Thought and the object to which thought adheres
No periods pass, no spaces intervene :
With pulse responsive, and enraptured ears,
Silently listening in a trance serene,
We hear a voice to whose prophetic tone
All things respond,—nor guess it is our own :

VI.

The Understanding spreads itself abroad,
Embraces all creation, sounds its deeps,
Enlarges its horizons, lifts its load
Easily ; like the spacious ocean, keeps
Touch on all coasts and shores, a single road
That yet leads everywhere ; and, while it sleeps
In its own depth, rippling it every way
The restless feelings o'er its surface play :

VII.

Our personal isolation giving place
To an unpent impersonality,
We trace the thoughts of others as we trace
Our own, and feel them just as easily
As we can feel ourselves ; with those whose face
Is unfamiliar to our bodily eye,
Those we but once or twice perchance have seen,
We hold communion intimate and keen :

VIII.

Promises, recognitions, greetings close,
Exchange and realize themselves in less
Time than 'twould take us even to utter those
Greetings, or formulate those promises :
Clearly we see what penalties oppose,
Or hindrances confront, our happiness ;
But all the struggle they involve we find
Reduced to a mere symbol of the mind :

IX.

Our force it weakens not, nor daunts our will :
We breathe the breath of victory : and, ere
The drop of ink still trembling on the quill
That o'er the page is hovering, can fall there,
Events have been accomplished in that still
Strange world, the pen that follows them will ne'er
Be able to catch up, tho' it may race
Thro' reams of paper at a breakneck pace :

X.

A word in passing dropped, the faint sweet sound
Of a dress rustling, a forgotten glove
Left on a chair or fall'n upon the ground,
A half-guessed fragrance that is felt to move
With a mysterious influence around
A half-heard footfall like a half-born love,
Or else the strayed note of some distant song,
Dying away vague memories among ;

XI.

Things slight and transient as all these, create
Those sweet hallucinations of the soul
Which force Eternity to circulate
Round a pin's point, and enter, with its whole
Vast troop of promised joys and inchoate
Felicities, into the films that roll
Their radiant falsehoods round about that vain
And bubble world we build in our own brain :

XII.

A clock that strikes, a bell that rings, a door
That opes or shuts, a hand that draws the blind,
And then the bubble bursts ; and we once more
Out of the abysses of the absent mind
Emerge bewildered ; and our wits trip o'er
Each other stupidly, as corks, confined
Beneath the waters, if one cuts their tether,
Come tumbling upward to the top together.

XIII.

So from his trance emerged Glenaveril,
When, from the room adjoining his, he heard
Emanuel's voice in Hebrew crying shrill
' *Where art thou, Adam ?* ' Starting at the word
He rose, with dreamy look that lingered still
Along the written page his starting stirred ;
And, as if troubled too by that stern cry,
It fluttered in his hand convulsively ;

XIV.

While the eight letters of Cordelia's name,
Which had erewhile been wandering, Heaven knows
where,
With him thro' time and space, as if with shame
Rushed back into their places, settling there
In haste ; like caught school children, when the Dame
Approaching calls, who then put on an air
Demure, let fall their flowers, and range themselves
Down the prim bench, unhappy little elves !

XV.

The world of dreams collapsed ; and, in its place,
The real situation reappeared.
With quivering frame, moist eyes, and blushing face,
He burst into Emanuel's study, cleared
At one light breathless bound the littered space
About the writing table, then upreared
And waved the letter, like a flag ; and then,
' Read ! read ! ' he cried, ' most fortunate of men ! '

XVI.

But the young Hebraist, o'er his task intent,
One elbow on the table based, one hand
Propping the prone brow that against it leant,
With fingers twisted in the loose locks fanned
By the quick breath from lips that Ivor bent
Above them, and the other, in command
Or supplication, lifting warningly
His pen, sighed, ' Wait a moment ! By and by ! '

XVII.

And his lips murmured what the pen went on
Tracing in Hebrew characters, that looked
Like troops of weary camels, one by one
After each other bearing on their crooked
Misshapen backs, beneath a burning sun,
Along the desert, heavy burdens hooked
And bound about their ugly humps—' *Woe's me,
Whose soul's sad sojourn must in Mesech be !* '

XVIII.

‘No, no!’ cried Ivor, ‘dear Emanuel,
‘Shut up that dreadful book! Read this! Be wise!
‘No more in Mesech let thy spirit dwell!
‘Forget awhile the fierce misanthropies
‘Of that fanatic race whose sullen spell
‘Unsweetens all, whose holiest ecstasies
‘Exhale in maledictions, whose fierce seers
‘With myrrh and amber mingle blood and tears!’

XIX.

‘Read this, where every line is vibrating
‘Harmonious with the music that one heart,
‘So sweet, so pure, doth to another sing!
‘That other thine, O favoured as thou art,
‘Whose life may be one long sweet listening
‘To its delicious song!’ And with a start
Emanuel laughed ‘Hath Solomon, then, writ
‘This canticle? Well, let me look at it!’

XX.

Wearily the pale student, as he spoke,
Stretched forth an irritable hand and took
The proffered letter. Not a whisper broke
The silence, while he studied, with the look
Of one who ill endures some misplaced joke,
The seal first, then the post-mark. Then, he shook
His long locks back with an impatient toss,
And a short sigh, half sorrowful, half cross.

XXI.

He read the letter thro' from end to end
 Rapidly; and, returning, scanned once more
 This page, and that; watched by his eager friend
 With looks that in his face would fain explore
 His inmost heart. The letter seemed to send
 No welcome message there. His visage wore
 A furrowed gloom beneath its growing frown;
 Till angrily he flung the letter down.

XXII.

'Hah!' he exclaimed, 'What means it, all this fuss?
 'Art thou the easy dupe of a device
 'As cruel as it is ridiculous?
 'A vulgar snare spread grossly to entice
 'The foolish vanity (Heaven pity us!)
 'Or the cupidity, not over nice,
 'Of penniless youth! A pleasantry, I say,
 'Cruel and coarse! There, take the thing away!'

XXIII.

Ivor recoiled, in inexpressible pain.
 'And were it so,' he sighed at length, 'Ah me,
 'Were it a snare as palpable and plain
 'As thou hast said, how much I pity thee
 'To have so soon detected it! What bane
 'Hath Poverty more bitter than when she
 'Destroys that blessing which the kind profusion
 'Of Nature freely gives to all—illusion?

XXIV.

'Come, come, Emanuel! I know thee well;
 'Methinks, indeed, I know thee better than
 'Thou dost thyself. All this, Emanuel,
 'Is but the sensitive pride which a proud man
 'Drapes, to protect it, in the unamiable
 'Guise of suspicion. Trust thy true self. Scan
 'These pages without prejudice again,
 'Then, sure am I, they will not plead in vain.

XXV.

'Yield to the simple charm that breathes thro' all,
 'Straight from a heart that shows itself to me
 'As pure and lucid as the crystal ball
 'Wherein, they say, souls young and pure could see
 'Their guardian angels.' 'That's equivocal,'
 Emanuel answered. 'It was Dr. Dee
 'Who owned that ball. Tradition says the man
 'Was only a pretentious charlatan."

XXVI.

'Well, then,' said Ivor, 'If you still persist
 'In looking thro' a magnifying glass
 'At what (when not distorted by the mist
 'Of your own miserable mistrust, alas!)
 'Is clearer than the clearest amethyst,
 'Begin where prudence, if not justice, must
 'The test dictate. Control the facts, compare
 'With your own knowledge each. That is but fair.'

XXVII.

And musingly replied Emanuel,
 ‘ I grant you, dear Glenaveril, I find
 ‘ That all the parts of this romance are well,
 ‘ And with no common artifice, combined.
 ‘ The thing’s a sort of little miracle
 ‘ Of misdirected cleverness, a kind
 ‘ Of masterpiece like that of Vaucanson,
 ‘ Whose artificial duck could quack and run ;

XXVIII.

‘ And yet the duck of Vaucanson remains
 ‘ A worthless piece of ingenuity.
 ‘ There are some people who will take such pains
 ‘ To paint the imitation of a fly,
 ‘ As Nature’s inconsiderate hand disdains
 ‘ When she creates a lion. But put by
 ‘ All other suppositions : look alone
 ‘ To what the case implies. Of two things, one.

XXIX.

‘ Suppose the letter genuine. In that case
 ‘ We must suppose, too, that at Baltimore
 ‘ Or Boston, or some other such-like place,
 ‘ There’s a young person’ (Here his hand turned
 o’er
 Cordelia’s letter, and a slight grimace
 Of mockery his expressive features wore)
 ‘ Who, in the opinion of her transatlantic
 ‘ Acquaintances, is flighty and romantic ;

XXX.

‘ And this young lady, who has used up quite
 ‘ The heroes of Scott, Bulwer, and George Sand,
 ‘ Being herself incompetent to write,
 ‘ Or to get readers if she did write, planned
 ‘ These silly pages, so as to unite
 ‘ In her own person author, volume, and
 ‘ Public, at once ; creating an ideal
 ‘ Out of calamities—alas, too real !

XXXI.

‘ Well then, since this at least is plain to me,
 ‘ I, who to that ideal in her mind
 ‘ Lack all resemblance, am in no degree
 ‘ Disposed to personate it, or inclined,
 ‘ By masquerading in its dress, to be
 ‘ A thief and swindler of the vilest kind,
 ‘ Using her high-flown faith, her credulous age,
 ‘ And foolish trust, to filch her heritage.

XXXII.

‘ Or else suppose my view of it is just,
 ‘ And that the letter is a heartless trick ;
 ‘ Played off, alas, not on my faith and trust,
 ‘ But the cupidity it makes me sick
 ‘ To think the writer of this letter must
 ‘ Attribute to me, or the lunatic
 ‘ Calf-headed self-conceit and vanity
 ‘ Of a coxcombical and moonstruck boy—

XXXIII.

‘ Ah Ivor, Ivor, bear with me ! I know
‘ I am not amiable. But is it, say,
‘ Not plain to thee, whichever of these two
‘ Assumptions be the right one, either way
‘ I cannot, ought not, must not, even bestow
‘ Another thought on what, if not child’s play,
‘ Is something worse and wickeder ?’ He took
His pen again, and bent above his book.

XXXIV.

Towards the end of this short argument,
Emanuel’s nature had at least so far
Regained a little of its natural bent
As to impart to its oracular
Hard logic a slight tone of penitent
Pathetic self-reproach. Some souls there are
(Ivor’s was one) who, when they smite it, bring
Forth from the hardest rock its hidden spring.

XXXV.

Touched by the deep dejection he beheld,
And honouring the proud frigid honesty
That sternly his solicitings repelled,
As if life’s happiness were all a lie
Against whose least dominion it rebelled,
Glenaveril turned, and whispered with a sigh
Into the air—‘ Thou hast thine answer heard,
‘ Poor pleading angel ! Clip thy wings, dear bird !

XXXVI.

' He whom thou wouldst uplift into thine own
' Ethereal regions, cannot fly up there ;
' He is a bold pedestrian. All alone
' It suits him best to foot the pathways bare
' And rugged where full many a flinty stone
' And thorny briar his bleeding feet will tear
' To assure him that he treads on solid ground.
' Go, Angel ! Here no use for wings is found !'

XXXVII.

' Nay, nay, Glenaveril ! dear Glenaveril !'
Emanuel cried, ' Why smite me where I smart ?
' Come now, we'll make a bargain, if you will !
' But tell me first, do you then, for your part,
' Believe in this American Angel still ?'
And Ivor answered ' I believe the heart
' This letter came from is a heart whence Love,
' Could he once enter it, would never rove.'

XXXVIII.

' So be it ! Then do thou, thyself, for me
' Answer that letter ; and, in my name, write it
' As for thyself thou wouldst. I promise thee
' Licence unbounded, Ivor, to indite it
' Just as thy heart dictates, whate'er that be.
' Appreciate this concession, and requite it,
' However, by a promise on thy part.'
' What promise ?' cried Glenaveril with a start.

XXXIX.

'Thou shalt,' Emanuel resumed, 'exact
 'From this kind angel, as a stipulation
 '(Mark this, for 'tis the basis of our pact !)
 'Conditional to all continuation
 'Of correspondence, a notarial act
 'On paper stamped, with legal attestation,
 'Proving the transfer, gift, or devolution
 'Of her whole fortune to some institution ;

XL.

'Some public charity, or public cause.
 'No protestations ! I am adamant.'
 And, scornfully, he added without pause,
 'The contract's fair, as even *you* must grant.
 'It costs *me* millions ! See there be no flaws
 'In the indenture ! That is all I want.
 'Is it a bargain ?' And Glenaveril sighed,
 But thought of his own millions, and replied

XLI.

Laughingly, 'But my pen is to be free ?'
 'Free,' said Emanuel, 'as the foolish bird
 'From which 'twas plucked. May its productions be
 'Not more unreasonable or absurd
 'Than such an origin, we must agree,
 'Would fully justify !' With that last word
 His psalter he reopened, muttering '*Strong*
 '*Are lying lips and a deceitful tongue !*'

CANTO IV.

THE ANSWER.

I.

DAILY Glenaveril bore about with him
Cordelia's letter, safely hid from sight
Against his heart. That heart was to the brim
Filled with the inebriation of delight
Which lifts upon the wings of Cherubim
A generous soul above the highest height
Of human joy, when it believes that Heaven
To it the keys of Paradise hath given,

II.

Not for its own, but for another's sake ;
With leave to ransack all the treasury
Of Heaven's well-hoarded happiness, and take
Joy's riches out in handfuls, to supply
The wants of those it loves. Alas ! 'twould make
The universe a bankrupt, did it try
To satisfy those spendthrifts who possess
Nothing themselves but self-forgetfulness !

III.

Emanuel's injunction irked him not.

In the first place, he valued wealth too slightly
To realise the magnitude of what

That cool condition meant. In all his nightly
And daily visions 'twas almost forgot.

In the next place, he deemed that he might rightly
Employ his own vast fortune to prevent
The wrong on which Emanuel seemed bent.

IV.

As, eager to begin, the artist stands

Before the marble in whose frozen womb
He sees the finished work of his own hands,

Ere yet those hands are raised to disentomb
The still-imprisoned image which demands

Its liberation,—so Glenaveril, whom
Cordelia's image haunted day and night,
Longed to express what he delayed to write.

V.

How could her image haunt him? Never yet

Had he beheld her. Yet her form and face
To him were so familiar, that he met

At every moment and in every place
Their welcome presence, and was quite upset

With rapture at the all-transcending grace
And all-surpassing beauty of them both ;
To which he could have certified on oath.

VI.

So was it ever since the world began,
And so it ever will be ! Sense is dull,
But sentiment is quick. No beauty can
(Tho' sweet as roses that are ripe to cull)
Make any woman loved by any man ;
But every man can still make beautiful
The woman that he loves, by loving her ;
Such beautifying power doth love confer !

VII.

Glenaveril was longing to commence
His letter—nay, to fly, if that could be,
Off to America at once ; and thence
Bring back Cordelia ; whom he knew that he
Should find there, waiting in full confidence
His coming ; carry her across the sea
Upon the wings of friendship, safe and well,
And then—present her to Emanuel !

VIII.

And he was in such haste all this to do—
Such desperate haste—that he had nothing done !
'Twas natural enough. 'Tis always so
In such-like cases. Out of doors you run,
And leave your hat behind you as you go,
Or if you take it with you, 'tis all one ;
But your first instinct is to get away,
And be alone—in some still woodland, say ?

IX.

Some woodland, where the good old trees stand
round,

And whisper low, 'We knew that you would come!
'We have been waiting for you. You were bound,
'Sooner or later, truant, to come home
'Out of that noisy world. What have you found?
'Is it delightful? Is it troublesome?
'Oh! 'tis advice you want of us? Well, well,
'What can we do for you? Sit down and tell!'

X.

This is what happened to Glenaveril,
When down he sank beneath an old elm tree,
On the fresh moss, beside a little rill;
For tired of running from himself was he.
And the tree whispered to him 'There! sit still!
'Of course it is advice you want of me.
'I thought as much. Young lovers always do.
'Well then, what is it I can do for you?'

XI.

'*What can I do for you?*' Oh, was there ever
A question so embarrassing as this?
To wish is easy; it needs no endeavour;
We all can do it, and we do. It is
A very different sort of thing, however,
To state off hand, and yet not state amiss,
What we are wishing. *Then*, we find that we
Can scarcely stammer thro' thought's A.B.C.

XII.

This also with Glenaveril came about
 Still, it was necessary to reply
 Something to such a question, which no doubt
 Was kindly meant. And, with a long soft sigh,
 As if that name said all, he stammered out
 ‘Cordelia!’ ‘Cordelia what, and why?’
 The trees made answer with significant stir;
 And he continued ‘I shall write to her!’

XIII.

‘Do!’ said the trees. ‘But *what* to write?’ sighed
 he.
 ‘That is the question!’ And he rubbed his chin
 Thoughtfully. ‘No, ’tis not! What troubles me
 ‘Is *how* to write.’ The trees replied ‘Begin!’
 And he began ‘Miss Stahl—’ That seemed to be
 Not to his taste. Nor did the effort win
 One murmur of approval from the trees,
 Altho’ those critics are not hard to please.

XIV.

‘No, that’s impossible! ’Twill never do.’
 And, musingly he mumbled, bit, and sucked
 His pencil. ‘’Tis ridiculous, I know;
 ‘Just like a cork stuck in a water duct,
 ‘That, while it sticks there, stops the fountain’s flow?’
 ‘Beginnings were invented to obstruct
 ‘Continuations!’ And the trees sighed, thinning
 Their loose leaves, ‘Do you call this a beginning?’

XV.

'No,' he replied, 'one puts it at the top
 'Of an unwritten page, like a vedette,
 'Pistol in hand, upon a hill, to stop
 'All comers. But there's nothing coming yet.'
 Then with a sigh he let his pencil drop,
 And mused 'The fittest heading I could get
 'Both for this letter and its writer's life
 'Would be the question asked by Bluebeard's wife :

XVI.

"Say, Sister Anne, what yonder seest thou?"
 'And Sister Anne herself can nothing see
 'But the grass growing in the field below,
 'And the dust whitening on the distant lea.
 'Ah, could I but begin, no matter how!
 'Why, why, so hard should the beginning be,
 'Even when one knows the end?' The trees again
 Said, 'Why not at the end begin it, then?'

XVII.

But Habit and Convention interposed,
 Suggesting, 'There's a style to be observed.'
 'That's true!' he answered ruefully, and closed
 His eyes, and racked his brains, and, half unnerved,
 Resumed his pencil, and, completely posed,
 Wrote, while his hand across the paper swerved
 And winced, and shook,—'Your letter, of blank date,
 'I have the honour to acknowledge'—'Wait!'

XVIII.

The trees broke in, all rustling with surprise,
That's worse than ever !' In humiliation
He hung his head, and mused with downcast eyes,
'What is the use of style ? 'Tis pure vexation !
'Since, when occasions really do arise
'For saying anything the situation
'Expressly calls for in the form most fit,
'Our first concern is to get rid of it !

XIX.

'Ah, if I had to write to her,' he sighed,
'Upon mine own account, 'twere easy then !
'I know what I would tell her !' 'Well, confide
'To us that knowledge,' said the trees again.
'I'd tell her all I feel for her !' he cried.
And the trees listened, trembling softly when
He whispered, trembling too, 'Cordelia,
'I love thee !' That was all he had to say.

XX.

'Ah !' said the trees, 'you should have told us that
'Before ; although we guessed it all the same.
'We know so well the heart of Youth, and what
'Is in it when we hear a woman's name
'Sighed from its lips ! What are you blushing at ?
'You love Cordelia ? That's no cause for shame.
'And your Cordelia, tell us, who is she ?
'For oh, so wondrously discreet are we ?'

XXI.

But still Glenaveril blushed. And Heaven knows why!
 The avowal that he was about to write
 Was for another. Did he blush and sigh
 For what that other felt? 'Twas surely quite
 Superfluous. Just as conscientiously
 With less emotional detail he might
 His mandate have fulfilled, nor yet distress
 His conscience by such conscientiousness.

XXII.

It may be, he had heard the trees repeat
 Their comments on his confidence, and found
 That they were, oh, so wondrous indiscreet!
 At any rate, he suddenly felt bound
 To justify the indiscretion sweet
 Of his own beating heart's too audible sound,
 And 'Since 'tis for Emanuel I write,
 'Politeness needs,' he said, 'must be polite!'

XXIII.

'Poor, foolish boy! Politeness is the name
 'Politely given to equivocation.'
 'Twas not a tree from which this comment came;
 But an old stump with fungus vegetation
 Encrusted thick. It was this old stump's aim,
 And, as it deemed, beneficent vocation,
 To extract out of the toadstools it evolved
 A system that all other systems solved.

XXIV.

The trees are made of more congenial stuff ;
And, sympathetic to the last degree,
No questioner do their kind hearts rebuff.
The advice they give to us is just what we
Would wish that they should give us. That's enough !
For what more welcome counsel could there be ?
O dear old trees, what kind wrong things you do !
What soothing, dangerous, counsellors are you !

XXV.

And all the trees (the *living* ones) combined
To efface the effect of the unpleasant speech
Of that old rotten stump. With arms entwined,
They nodded, winked, and whispered, each to each,
'Of course ! The thing's quite natural. We find
'No reason his conclusion to impeach.
'Tis the most complimentary address,
'And he for his own friend could do no less ;

XXVI.

'Were it himself the case concerned alone,
'He'd do it all the same. And that's the test !
'Men should for others do what they'd have done
'For their own selves. This rule is always best.
'And, in some way or other, every one
'Whose letters to a woman are address'd
'Must end where he begins. There never yet
'Was any woman who resented it ;

XXVII.

'Tis every time quite new ; 'tis sometimes good,
' And always pleasant. Hush ! What writes he ?
rhymes ?

' No, but the better to be understood

' He hath repeated it a dozen times.

' Encourage him, while he is in the mood !'

And in the mood he was. The elms and limes
All clapped their leaves, the blackbird cleared his
throat, .

And with a rapid hand Glenaveril wrote—

XXVIII.

' Cordelia ! dear Cordelia !' (he began)

' I love thee. Yes, I love thee. There, 'tis said !

' But there's no other word for it, that can

' Express what I have felt since first I read

' Thy letter. All that to the heart of man

' Is dearest, and that mine most coveted,

' That letter gave me. Ah, could mine to thee

' Give aught as precious as thou art to me !

XXIX.

' And new and strange as to myself they are,

' I know these feelings must have in me been

' Since I began to be. They come from far,

' And they have far to go. But, all unseen

' Unfelt, unguessed, their secret ; like a star

' That is, but shines not till from heavens serene

' All clouds have vanished, in my mortal frame

' Lay hid the immortal influence of thy name.

XXX.

‘Immortal? Yes! for if that spark divine
 ‘Within us, which on earth can find no rest
 ‘Even in earth’s happiest moments, but doth pine
 ‘For more than earth can give us at the best,—
 ‘If this immortal be—then so is thine
 ‘Intensest influence, that with all things blest
 ‘Unites itself to fill the soul and heart
 ‘Of all I am with love of all thou art!

XXXI.

‘Thou knewest this must be—that love was there,
 ‘And love was thine, and love thy call awaited.
 ‘Thou didst but whisper “Come!” From every-
 where
 ‘Love rushed, and life with love was saturated!
 ‘The earth, the sky, the universal air,
 ‘Are changed around me, and a world created
 ‘By love in its own image springs to life
 ‘Invoking thee—Cordelia, be my wife!

XXXII.

‘Heaven, that on earth the blessèd dew bestows,
 ‘Doth it abandon its own gift? Ah no!
 ‘Heaven sends its own sweet sun, from every rose
 ‘That hides a dewdrop, with his golden glow
 ‘To gather back to heaven again all those
 ‘Else-perished pearls. Cordelia, even so
 ‘Do thou! Cordelia, thou mine own sweet sun,
 ‘What can I tell thee more? All’s said. All’s done.’

XXXIII.

‘And *well* done!’ said the trees. ‘If he so well
‘Pleads for another, with what fine orations
‘Would his own case inspire him? Who can tell?
‘Vows, pledges, promises, and protestations,
(‘The children of the air!) not long can dwell
‘In human bodies pent. Mankind’s sensations
‘They plague till vehement words the sufferers cry;
‘Then with those words forthwith away they fly;

XXXIV.

‘And what becomes of them? Ah, what becomes
‘Of our own leaves? They fall and fly away,
‘But, falling, feed our roots, make sheltering homes
‘For violets, and in some sort of way
‘Some sort of purpose serve. The leaf that roams,
‘What is it that its roaming doth betray?
‘Be ours the grace our withered leaves to bless,
‘And not to curse men’s withered promises!

XXXV.

‘All promises say always all they will,
‘And all they can they always keep; and so
‘It hath been ever, and so ever will!
‘What more than this hath done, what more can
do,
‘The world’s wide promise, we all trust to still?
‘Each year it comes full-handed, and doth go
‘How often empty! yet each living thing
‘Hails, year by year, the promise of the Spring!’

XXXVI.

O dear old trees ! O good old trees ! whose smiles
And whispers are so tender and so kind
To our poor foolish wishes, wants, and wiles,
Our loves so weak of heart, so weak of mind,
Our vain conceptions, and our feeble styles !
What makes you so indulgent ? so inclined
To deem the best ? Were you disposed to scoff,
Lovers and poets would be badly off !

XXXVII.

But those old gossips have, between them, less
Taste, criticism, science, literature,
Than one cheap penn'orth of the Daily Press !
Theirs, unenlightened shadows that obscure
Their faculties, and drowsy silences
Whose superstitious dreams but ill endure
The noise that to the March of Mind belongs !
And no discourse but little twittering songs !

XXXVIII.

And thro' their patient bark they let us drive
Pert penknives, graving names that (interlaced
As once their hands, who fastened them) survive
The fickle sentiment whose impulse traced
Those records of a love that doth contrive,
When all the rest of it hath been effaced,
To leave its lasting cicatrice behind,
Forgotten on the poor tree's faithful rind.

XXXIX.

Back to the town as, with his letter, gay
 And glowing-spirited, Glenaveril went,
 He to himself repeated all the way
 Each word he had been writing. These words sent
 Thro' all his frame, about his brain to play,
 A stream of melodies; and each event
 Performed by his own fancy to that strain,
 Produced a musical drama in his brain;

XL.

A sort of Operatic Rigmarole,
 Unconsciously burlesque. The curtain rose :—
 Chorus and dance of peasants; who extol
 'Cordelia—fairer than the lily and rose,
 'Sweeter than milk and honey!' Then the whole
 Procession passes. Forests that disclose
 The Sioux' dusky tribes; storm muttering
 Far off, unheeded; and the Sioux sing—

XLI.

'Cordelia, the pale-faced maiden, white
 'As moonlight, and as woodbine wavering,
 'Hath dazzled with her beauty's beams the sight
 'Of the Swift Lizard. Woodbine-maiden cling
 'To the Swift Lizard! moon-white maiden light
 'His wigwam! the Swift Lizard is a king
 'Mighty and strong, as thou art soft and tender,
 'But dark his wigwam is without thy splendour!'

XLII.

Cordelia's palace ; midnight, moonlight, sleep ;
Sudden alarm, confusion, fire, the foe !
The Sioux thro' the burning palace creep,
And bear away Cordelia. Music, slow,
Tender and soft : Cordelia's maidens weep.

A man appears, unarmed ; nor spear nor bow
He carries, but he sings with marvellous art
The song Glenaveril hears in his own heart ;

XLIII.

All are subdued by that persuasive song ;
Pleased with the singer, the Swift Lizard smokes
The pipe of peace ; makes an oration long,
And then restores Cordelia ; who invokes
A blessing on her saviour. All the throng
Disperses ; and the singer, as he chokes
A sigh, conducts Cordelia, cool and calm,
To join Emanuel in the Hundredth Psalm !

XLIV.

But, ere the last magnificent quartette
Between Cordelia and Emanuel,
King David and himself, had opened yet,
Over the stage abrupt the curtain fell,
Called by a voice that cried out, ' Don't forget
' To get the paper stamped ! ' This broke the spell.
Cordelia swooned ; his harp King David dropped ;
The Sioux vanished ; and the play was stopped.

XLV.

The man whose voice had brought this end about
Was standing on a doorstep, talking fast
To some one (his solicitor, no doubt)
On his own business. As Glenaveril passed
He overheard those words, that put to rout
His whole phantasmagoria ; and aghast,
' Good heavens ! ' he exclaimed, ' that admonition
' Reminds me of Emanuel's condition !

XLVI.

' Faith, I had clean forgotten it ! I ought
' To have begun my note with it, I fear.
' But it can soon be added.' At the thought,
He ran back to his lodging, which was near,
And added to his letter (changing nought
He had already written) this most clear
And simple postscript—' Dear Cordelia,
' There's something else that I forgot to say.

XLVII.

' I want you to oblige me, first of all,
' In one small matter. Large as it may be,
' The fortune that you speak of is too small
' To embrace the universe you are to me.
' In fact, 'tis in our way. You will not call
' Unnatural, I hope, my wish to free
' Our love from all that is for love unfit :
' Oblige me, therefore, and get rid of it.

XLVIII.

'Part with it, dear, in any way you can !
 'To charities, or something of that kind.
 'I know not why I ask this, further than
 'That I dislike your fortune, and I find
 'I cannot love it as I think the man
 'You love should love what's yours. You will not
 mind
 'Complying with this wish of mine, I know.
 'Tis only, dearest, that I love you so !'

XLIX.

Having achieved this masterpiece of zeal
 And tact, he closed his letter up with care,
 Addressed, and sealed it with Emanuel's seal ;
 A simple one, on which two letters were—
 E. M.—nought else. Nor did he even feel
 The least ashamed that his dispatch should bear
 A lie upon its face, but laughed 'Well caught !'
 And rubbed his hands, quite merry at the thought.

L.

'Caught in thine own trap, dear Emanuel !
 'What matter if Cordelia *do*, for thee,
 'Part with her fortune, as 'tis probable ?
 'Enough for both of you mine own will be.
 'Nothing can hinder that ! So all is well,
 'And each will be content, I, thou and she !
 Then forth, in these benign reflections lost,
 He hastened, with his letter, to the post.

LI.

So fast he went, that he almost upset
 The venerable Edelrath, before
 He was aware what obstacle had met
 And stopped the impetuosity that bore
 Him and his whirling wits away with it.
 The rushing course of History, o'er and o'er
 Hath been diverted, checked, and made to miss
 Great issues by small accidents like this.

LII.

'What, Ivor!—There it goes into the gutter,
 'My wretched hat!—No matter, boy!—But, say!
 'Whither so fast? and why in such a flutter?
 'It happens I was just upon my way
 'To find thee—Never mind the hat! Don't utter
 'Another sigh for such a trifle, pray!
 'Tis only a small windfall for the hatter.
 'But we must talk now on a serious matter;

LIII.

'I've much to tell thee that is urgent. Come!
 'And, since my door is close at hand, come in!
 'Things of this kind are best discussed at home.
 'Lend me thine aid, lad!' And he laid his thin
 Lean hand on Ivor's arm with wearisome
 Tenacity. Glenaveril felt begin
 The pangs of Purgatory; but he knew
 That flight was hopeless, and resistance too.

LIV.

So back with Edelrath his steps he bent
To the Professor's lodging, listlessly ;
Nor heard a word of what, as on they went
The old man talked. Dim in his dreary eye
The very sense of sight grew somnolent ;
And, like a captured bird that cannot fly,
Tho' unresisting, he was unresigned ;
For every step left Paradise behind.



CANTO V.

EDEL RATH TO THE RESCUE.

I.

THE chamber wherein Edelrath's affairs

And he were commonly concealed from sight,
Was at the top of three long flights of stairs.

It was a spacious chamber, airy, light,
And cheerful, though replete with little lairs

And nooks where even the shyest spider might
Feel sure she under no constraint need be
To spoil her spinning, like Penelope.

II.

The house that held it was a corner one ;

The town, the river, and the hills it faced.

Two windows faced the river, one alone

The town. The walls, from floor to roof, were
cased

With books in multitudes ; among them none

Well bound, and many unbound. There was
placed

Across one window an immense divan,

Settee, or sofa, of gigantic span :

III.

Its Sybarite appearance was belied,
 However, by its Spartan qualities ;
Which doubtless would have more than satisfied
 Lycurgus, if that legislator wise
Upon his countrymen could once have tried .
 Its painful discipline. The sofa's size
Appeared designed to impose on the infliction
Of general discomfort, no restriction ;

IV.

The surface of its bed of suffering
 Was like those *papier-mâché* maps, whereby
Modern Geography contrives to bring
 Home to the touch as well as to the eye
What obstacles Dame Nature loves to fling
 At Railway Companies, as her reply
To their pert questions. But, more bold than man,
Books had appropriated this divan.

V.

They had it to themselves : and there they lay
 Stark naked, sprawling, every one of them
Without a rag about its back, and grey
 With dust. The Jews, when for Jerusalem,
Along the Babylonian waters, they
 Lamented, (miserable sons of Shem !)
Made not those river banks look more forlorn
Than was the aspect by this sofa worn ;

VI.

For hither brown papyri of the Nile,
With saffron scrolls from Herculaneum,
And mildewed parchments, haply once the spoil
Of barbarous Macedonian monks, had come
To build a sort of monumental pile,
In memory of the Alexandrian Home
Of Erudition, with its crowded crypts,
And their five hundred thousand manuscripts.

VII.

'Alas, for Ptolemy Euërgetes!
'Alas, for Literary Vanity!
'Alas, that bronze, in spite of Horace, is
'More durable than paper!' There, each dry,
Dust-strewn, dishevelled volume, into these
Mute lamentations bursting, grieved the eye;
And there, in spite or pity, from near shelves
Others had desperately flung themselves.

VIII.

Fronting the window stood, with a fierce glare
Upon its face, which its uncouthness heightened,
A Gothic monster grim enough to scare
With fear that classic colony enlightened,
If books, that frighten us who read them, were
Susceptible themselves of being frightened.
This monster was a stove, whose giant pile
Was built of bits of glistening sea-green tile.

IX.

The potter who had made it must have been
A man of sombre genius, and morose,
Who sought to imitate with gusto, keen
But coarse and barbarous, the grandiose
Array of horrors which to the dread scene
Of his Last Judgment, Michael Angelo's
Imagination hath assigned ; and well
Did that stove's face its fiery purpose tell ;

X.

For in the rough reliefs all round it wrought,
Devils, damned souls, and instruments of pain,
Those who its neighbourhood for comfort sought
Were forced to contemplate ; and, lest in vain
Should be the lesson its appearance taught,
'Twas so contrived that audible and plain
To ears of shivering sinners every minute
Should be the roaring of the fire within it.

XI.

So, frowning down upon the books, it looked
Like Omar's Arab captain all elate ;
Waiting, as tho' with arms akimbo crooked,
The signal to begin and imitate
Amru Ben Abâs who (howe'er rebuked
By bibliophiles) was probably so great
And true a benefactor to mankind,
That gratitude should keep his name in mind :

XIII.

For merciful the feat that man performed
When for six months (if the report be true)
The stoves of full four thousand baths he warmed
By burning all the editions old and new
Of all the immortal authors. Ere he stormed
And burned their citadel, Ben Abâs knew,
Perhaps, the nuisance they were sure to be
If still immortal now the Press is free.

XIII.

The object that attracted next the eye
Was a long table, filling half the room ;
It might have come from the refectory
Of one of those old convents, from whose doom
Many a rising university
The Reformation suffered to assume,
To the relief of its own revenue,
Not their lands only, but their chattels too.

XIV.

Even the ruins of establishments
Reared by Religion, and by her endowed,
Have thus contributed at all events
Some aids to those which Science, with a proud
Pretence of independence, still presents
As her unshared achievement to the crowd.
Alas, Religion no such aid receives
Out of the refuse of what Science leaves !

XV.

Loaded this table was, with many a mound
Of manuscript, and books; and the immense
Tracts of chance-drifted litter that abound
In students' rooms here joined their jungles dense :
But, like a plot of neatly-gardened ground,
A little space surrounded by a fence
Of folios (and no fence could have been fitter)
Was cleared out in the middle of the litter :

XVI.

That little central space the aspect wore
Of one of those "reserved enclosures" seen
In royal parks. Stationed on guard before
Their gates, a sentry stands; but, viewed between
The bars, a lawn where fountains spout and flow,
Long alleys, and embosomed in the green
A trim pavilion, fascinate the crowd
'Whose entry thro' those gates is not allowed.

XVII.

Here, the pavilion was a timepiece, all
In ormolu, which might, perhaps, have been
When France and Taste were both Imperial,
A nick-nack of the Empress Josephine :
Four burnished columns propped a burnished ball ;
Above the ball an eagle perched ; between
The columns sat a lady thinly clad,
Who looked extremely ill, and rather mad :

XVIII.

The lawn was a large blotting-book, and there
The impress of assiduous cultivation
Was unmistakable ; the fountains were
Two pewter inkstands, each with a plantation
Of geesequils ; long white quires of foolscap fair
Served for the alleys ; and the sentry's station,
Guarding the gate, was taken by a large
Armchair that seemed to have the whole in charge.

XIX.

' Sit down ! ' said Edelrath ; and to this seat
He pointed with a gesture such as might
Have graced Augustus when he deigned to entreat
Cinna's attention. Then, with infinite
Solemnity, he drew from out a great
Tin box whereon was writ in letters white
The name ' GLENAVERIL,' a document
Which he perused with looks of deep content.

XX.

' Sit down ! ' he nodded, and went on, ' sit down !
' In this report our good friend Mr. Grey
' With every possible detail has shown
' The exact condition (and I think you'll say
' It does the greatest credit to his own
' Intelligence and zeal, in every way)
' Of your Scotch property. To say the least,
' Its value has enormously increased :

XXI.

‘ Increased, I mean, since your poor father died.
‘ But there’s one point now waiting your reply,
‘ And ’tis a point you must yourself decide.
‘ Some valuation of the property
‘ Will probably be needed as a guide
‘ To your decision, and these facts supply
‘ The basis for it; but, as Grey says here,
‘ Most of the leases will expire next year;

XXII.

‘ The point is, on what terms will you renew
‘ These leases? That requires consideration.
‘ His own suggestions Grey submits to you,
‘ And these, too, well deserve examination.
‘ But in so grave a matter ’twill not do
‘ To act on these alone. Grey’s explanation
‘ Is clear and copious, but our worthy friend
‘ Craves your opinion—Ivor, do attend!’

XXIII.

‘ I do,’ said Ivor, ‘ but it matters not.
‘ I’ve no opinion; none, at least, I mean,
‘ Worth giving: and no good were to be got
‘ By wading through some dozen or fifteen
‘ Pages of foolscap, to arrive at what
‘ Is clear already—that I needs must lean
‘ On Grey’s decision, whatso’er it be.
‘ I trust him fully. That’s enough for me.’

XXIV.

Wrinkling his shaggy eyebrows to a frown,
Edelrath eyed his pupil ; with a sigh,
He drew a stool near Ivor's chair, sat down,
Pulled off his spectacles, and wiped them dry,
And put them on again ; then, laid a brown
Large bony hand with mild authority
Upon the young man's arm, and said, ' For shame !'
Glenaveril blushed. ' In what am I to blame ?'

XXV.

' In what !' reëchoed Edelrath, ' in what ?
' In this indifference to duty, boy,
' This trifling with a serious trust ! Your lot
' Providence hath permitted to enjoy
' A princely heritage : you made it not,
' Nor could you make it if you were to try :
' Yours is the product of the strength and skill
' Of generations, dear Glenaveril ;

XXVI.

' Yours, to preserve, to better if you can,
' But not to trifle with or fling away !
' A little more respect, young gentleman,
' For what is difficult ! It is, I say,
' Extremely difficult howe'er you plan,
' And plot, and pinch, and plod, and drudge, to lay
' A little capital by when all is done,
' That's just enough for the support of one :

XXVII.

‘ To lay the bases, and to fix them sure,
‘ Of some vast fortune able to fulfil
‘ The splendid wants of families that endure
‘ For generations, is beyond the skill
‘ Of most men ; and no simple sinecure
‘ Have you inherited ; for harder still
‘ It is, believe me, proper care to take
‘ Of that great heritage you did not make.

XXVIII.

‘ Tut ! tut ! Attempt not to expostulate !
‘ I know you are not, and will never be,
‘ One of those brainless, heartless fools of fate,
‘ Who waste in unenjoyed frivolity
‘ The wealth they are unable to create.
‘ But there’s one foe to manly virtue, he
‘ That hath in keeping a great fortune must
‘ Most guard against, if faithful to his trust ;

XXIX.

‘ And that is the impatient weariness,
‘ The growing increase of disinclination,
‘ Which he must needs experience more or less
‘ In the details of its administration.
‘ The forest, whose umbrageous beauties bless
‘ The traveller with an undisturbed sensation
‘ Of joy and peace, may to its owner be
‘ Mainly a troublesome anxiety ;

XXX.

'To him that forest represents, not trees
'Whose hospitable boughs diffuse a dim
'Delicious languor, but those foes to ease,
'Figures fatiguingly precise and prim,
'Which he must reckon up by twos and threes
'To hundreds, thousands. Not enough for him
'That two and two make four! He has to strive
'That practically two and two make five.

XXXI.

'You have, I know, in Mathew Grey, a good,
'An excellent, agent. He deserves, no doubt,
'Your fullest confidence. 'Tis understood,
'However, that he cannot act without
'Your orders. If you're never in the mood
'To notice what he writes to you about,
'You hurt his honesty, and Mathew Grey
'Will feel his pains are being thrown away.

XXXII.

'The master must not abdicate, you know,
'Because the servant's zealous. So sit down
'With a good will, since I have caught you now,
'(Two heads are better at such tasks, you'll own,
'Than one) and let us pass an hour or two
'In going thro' these papers. I have thrown
'The totals into simple tables, see,
'Which shows the case as plain as A B C.'

XXXIII.

‘Yes, yes, dear Father Edelrath, I will !’
Cried Ivor, bounding at the word away,
‘Only, to-morrow (do not take it ill !)
‘To-morrow, or the next day, not to-day !
‘How can I sit down quietly, with quill
‘And paper, to work out how best I may
‘Wring twenty pounds a year, with no great harm,
‘Out of some miserable highland farm,

XXXIV.

‘When in this little letter (I must go
‘And post at once) I’ve spurned without regret
‘As many million dollars? No, no, no !
‘Another day !’ And, all upon the fret,
He pushed the papers from him, sprang up so
Impetuously he almost upset
His tutor for the second time that day,
And hastened to the door. ‘Stay, Ivor, stay !’

XXXV.

Cried Edelrath aghast. ‘These ears, alas,
‘Are old, and surely must have heard amiss
‘Your answer, boy ! But, whatsoe’er it was,
‘For twenty years that I have known you, this
‘Is the first time it ever came to pass
‘That Ivor sought to make a jest of his
‘Old friend and tutor.’ And Glenaveril,
Keeping his hand upon the door, stood still.

XXXVI.

Checked in his impulse, in his purpose crossed,
He could not on the instant so repress
The disappointment that was uppermost
In his sensations, but what more or less
Of his composure in the attempt was lost.
And with that tone of curt impatientness
Which, by a young man to an old employed,
Sounds almost insolent, he exclaimed, annoyed,

XXXVII.

‘Your ears, dear Father Edelrath, are still
‘As good as ever! ’Tis your memory
‘Only that fails a little; else, you still,
‘I think, would give me credit for what I
‘At least forget not—the Glenaveril
‘Device, which pledges me to truth. Ah, why
‘Do you suppose I mean not what I say?
‘*Glenaveril je suis, et ie suis vrai!*’

XXXVIII.

The old man crossed the floor, and softly took
The boy’s two hands in his, and drew him thus
Silently with him to the window-nook,
And there perused with a solicitous
And anxiously inquisitive long look
The young man’s face. ‘What has gone wrong
with us?’
He whispered tenderly. ‘Thy hands are hot.
‘Something disturbs thee,—and I know it not!’

XXXIX.

‘ Ah, have I not,’ he added with a sigh,
‘ The right to know thine inmost thoughts?—the
right !
‘ Well, no ! I meant not that. No right have I,
‘ Only an old sweet habit, that seemed quite
‘ Established by thy trust and sympathy ;
‘ And if thy confidence I now invite,
‘ Let it convince thee, Ivor, that mine still
‘ Doubts not the Motto of Glenaveril ! ’

XL.

To this appeal the answer was a close
Long warm embrace. ‘ Yes, yes ! ’ Glenaveril cried,
‘ Mine inmost thoughts, dear Edelrath, are those
‘ Which most of all my heart would fain confide
‘ To thee, mine earliest, wisest friend. How gross
‘ Was my forgetfulness ! But all,’ he sighed,
‘ Hath come so quick,—is still so strange ! Nay, sit,
‘ And listen ! Thou shalt hear the whole of it ! ’

XLI.

With all the feverish eloquence of love
Glenaveril told to Edelrath his tale.
So deeply did Cordelia’s letter move
His feelings while he read it out, that, pale
With passion, oft he paused, and tears above
Its pages dropped. ‘ I knew thou couldst not fail,’
He cried, ‘ to be profoundly moved by this.
‘ Oh what a soul ! how beautiful it is !

XLII.

'What candour! what sublimity of pure
 'And noble innocence! what generous trust!
 'What self-forgetfulness! Ah, I was sure
 'That *thou* wouldst feel them all! Emanuel must
 'Be blind and deaf. How else could he endure
 'To spurn so rich a pearl into the dust?
 'How glad I am that I can talk to thee
 'Of all I feel, for it was stifling me!'

XLIII.

Edelrath, with no gesture of assent
 Or sympathy, to Ivor's eloquence
 Had listened mute; his bald brow forward bent,
 His attitude revealing an intense
 Attention. When Glenaveril's force was spent
 At last by its own breathless vehemence,
 The stern old Mentor slowly raised his head,
 On Ivor's face fixed two cold eyes, and said—

XLIV.

'Ah! and this candour, this sublimity
 'Of innocence, this generous trust in one
 'Whose name and place thou hast usurped, thereby
 'To filch the gifts that were for him alone,
 'And recompense with an elaborate lie
 'Her simple confidence! was that well done?
 'And is it thus, then, that thou dost fulfil
 'Thy vaunted Motto of Glenaveril?

XLV.

‘Be silent! What! as if it were to win
‘A wager, thou couldst practise on the heart
‘And soul of this poor girl, and see no sin
‘In playing the abominable part
‘Of the arch-trickster and seducer in
‘Emanuel’s cruel comedy? Ay, start
‘And blush! for, *O Glenaveril sois vrai*,
‘’Tis thou thyself dost love Cordelia!’

XLVI.

Then, like a judge whose sentence is delivered,
Edelrath rose. Beneath his puckered white
Rough eyebrows, on Glenaveril, who shivered
And cowered upon his chair, he flashed a bright
Rebukeful glance; and stretched an arm that quivered
(As that of some indignant prophet might)
Down from the shoulder to the finger-joint
With the strong menace it was raised to point.

XLVII.

Glenaveril was thunder-struck. His whole
Lost Paradise in ruins round him lay,
Beyond redemption gone! The enchanter’s bowl
Was broken at his lip. The ground gave way
Beneath his foot. He felt his very soul
Rent like a garment. In his vast dismay
Long while for utterance he seemed to strive,
Then cried aloud ‘Cordelia, forgive!’

XLVIII.

‘And that thou still may’st have the right at least
‘To be forgiven,’ Edelrath replied,
‘Forbear to write to her!’ Then, with increased
Severity of tone and mien, he cried,
‘Where is that letter?’ Ivor from his breast
Drew forth his letter, turned his head aside,
And with a trembling hand, and a faint sigh,
Laid it upon the table silently.

XLIX.

‘’Tis well!’ said Edelrath. ‘I need not know
‘What it contains. I will not open it.
‘Whatever thou hast written will be now,
‘Thank God, as if it never had been writ!
‘And that’s enough. O Ivor, Ivor, how
‘Couldst thou have dug for thine own heart this
pit
‘Of self-deception? There, there! never mind!
‘No harm’s done yet—thou art no longer blind—

L.

‘And as for this—’ With a mute shrug he tossed
Across the room Glenaveril’s letter. Down
It fluttered, with its red seal uppermost,
Its shamed face flat upon a folio brown
Of the Confessions of Augustine; lost
To love, but saved from wickedness unknown;
Like some poor pretty sinful Magdalen
Prone on the chill floor of her flinty den!

LI.

This satisfaction given to righteous wrath
And vengeful virtue, with relenting breast
Compassionately, Father Edelrath
Turned to Glenaveril, and murmured 'Blest
'Be Grey! whose conscientious labour hath
'Achieved the rescue (it must be confessed,
'No whit too soon, but none the less, in time)
'Of his dear master's conscience from a crime!

LII.

'Nay, dear Glenaveril, be not so downcast!
'Oft in our noblest sentiments we find
'Our falsest traitors. But the danger's past.
'And not the first are you whose heart a kind
'And generous impulse hath lured on, too fast
'For the safe guidance of the lagging mind,
'To that abyss so slippery and so steep
'Where, like dumb thunderclouds, the passions sleep.

LIII.

'Between our acts and our intentions ever
'There is a bridge without a parapet:
'Beneath it flows life's unreturning river:
'So narrow is the way that one, to let
'The other pass, must disappear; and never
'Have these quick travellers escaped as yet
'That dangerous encounter. What betides
'Where there they meet, man's destiny decides.

LIV.

‘ From each extremity a road runs by :
‘ Back from those roads no travellers ever fare :
‘ The road of Action is Fatality,
‘ That of Intention is Repentance ; there
‘ Wander those phantoms vain whose plaintive cry
‘ Troubles our sleep : the other road leads where
‘ Columbus finds a world, or else Macbeth
‘ Climbs the dark turret plotting Duncan’s death.

LV.

‘ A mask, in its inception, Action wears :
‘ It is the function of the will to smite
‘ That mask aside, and face what then appears,—
‘ The nature of the undone deed. Requite,
‘ Child of my heart, with no ungrateful tears
‘ The rude but friendly hand that to my sight
‘ Reveals the act to which thine innocent
‘ Intention yielded a beguiled assent !

LVI.

‘ The pathway of Repentance still is free.
‘ Fear not to enter it, Glenaveril ! Let
‘ Thy saved intention there a pilgrim be ;
‘ And, tho’ it wear the garment of regret,
‘ Be comforted ! for Time is kind, and he
‘ On sorrows that are innocent doth set
‘ So sweet an aspect, that to them Love rears
‘ His fairest fanes, above the Vale of Tears !

LVII.

'But after all,' the old man with a smile
 Continued, 'this is but an April shower!
 'And here am I (old pedant!) all this while
 'Prating, as if when it begins to lower
 'We needs must instantly construct a pile
 'As strong as Noah's to resist the power
 'Of the whole deluge, when in fact I grant
 "'Tis only an umbrella that we want!

LVIII.

'Really old pedants like myself are quite
 'Ridiculous in their fastidiousness!
 'Here is a boy as good as gold, upright,
 'Brave, generous, unselfish to excess,
 'Who loves, admires, and with a boy's delight
 'Would freely sacrifice himself to bless
 'His friend, or his friend's friend—and I must rave
 'As if he were, forsooth, an arrant knave!

LIX.

'Twere just as rational to criticise
 'The cannon fired in Hamlet! One should view
 'The anachronisms and absurdities
 'Of a great poet, and the errors too
 'Of a great heart, with such indifferent eyes!
 'They are not of the least importance; who
 'But pedants mind them? Come then, my poor boy,
 'My young Astyanax, my Hope of Troy!

LX.

‘Come! pardon thine old pedant, and resume
‘The task we have to do together still!
‘Help me to reckon, ere we quit this room,
‘That two and two make four, Glenaveril!
‘That’s safer than exhorting maidens whom
‘You never saw, and haply never will,
‘To fling with an enthusiasm antic
‘Their father’s ducats into the Atlantic.

LXI.

‘And by the way, to make an end of it,
‘Where did *I* fling that precious letter down?
‘Ah, there it lies! concealing, as ’tis fit,
‘The address it well may be ashamed to own!
‘And braving me (as if I cared a whit
‘To answer such a saucy challenge, thrown
‘Right in my face!) with its unbroken seal!
‘No, witch! thy secret thou need’st not reveal,

LXII.

‘Thou for a sorceress shalt be burnt, without
‘Having confessed thy sins—peace be to them!
‘There never surely was a lie laid out
‘In shorter formula than this E. M. !
‘A most laconical untruth, no doubt,
‘Yet not a little one! Well, I condemn
‘The sorceress to the fire. My matchbox! Where
‘Hath Agatha concealed it? I declare

LXIII.

'That damsel's desperately tidy hand
 'Is more secretive than a magpie's nest!
 'Where *are* those matches gone? They ought to stand
 'Always upon this table, with the rest
 'Of its equipment—Nixies, Pixies, and
 'Kobolds, and Kelpies! why have you possessed
 'Yourselves of my poor matches?—Ah, they're here!
 'That's well! Now, then, the letter! Never fear,

LXIV.

'The witch can't fly, now!' Saying this, he took
 The matchbox up—approached a candlestick
 That stood upon the reading-desk, and strook
 A match; then o'er the candle's lighted wick,
 The letter held. With a contented look
 He watched it burn and shrivel, muttering 'Quick!
 'Bravo! Burn, sorceress, burn! Now I defy
 'The wily footsteps of Fatality!

LXV.

'All's safe, thank Heaven! and there remains no
 more
 'Than these burnt ashes to betray the past
 'Or jeopardize the future. Come, once more
 'Back to our task, dear Ivor! Here at last
 'Truth finds safe refuge. Two and two make four;
 'A little fact, with a deduction vast!
 'Pythagoras was right? To numbers stick,
 'If Truth you'd find: her name's Arithmetic!'

LXVI.

And Ivor stretched a penitent hand, and cried
 (With that forced gaiety which smiles in pain)
‘Ay, two and two make four! And yet,’ he sighed,
 ‘That is a truth which is not always plain!
‘But thou, at least, mine eyes hast opened wide,
 ‘And taught them too, old friend, nor taught in vain,
‘To see so many things, I yet may live
‘To learn, perhaps, how two and two make five!’

CANTO VI.

FATE TO THE RESCUE.

I.

GLENAVERIL'S character was one of those
That suffering sours not. From a stern, a long,
And a brave struggle with himself, he rose
Sorrowful but not sullen, with a strong
Resolve to let no word or look disclose
How sharp the strife had been. And so, along
His wonted ways with mien unchanged he moved,
Still loving as before, and still beloved.

II.

Meanwhile, the long vacation, drawing nigh,
Drew with it, for its own discomfoting,
(Like one of those last frosts that oft destroy
Young buds put forth at the approach of Spring)
The day on which, before the Faculty,
Emanuel, with what forces he could bring
To its support, his thesis must sustain.
So sharper still he ground that tool, his brain.

III.

The blithe ambition and the sanguine soul
That warm with hope the student's emulous breast
Cheered not his toil ; for he despised the goal
To which its dogged efforts were addressed :
Such toil's achievements justly on the whole
He judged, and deemed them barren at the best ;
So that upon itself his spirit preyed,
And thus his thoughts with their own shadows played :

IV.

' The brain ! strange fusion of both instrument
' And subject, like a magnet in a vice
' Of iron ! Who can say to what extent
' For magnetism gained it pays the price
' Of simultaneous magnetism spent ?
' Doth not its profit to its loss entice,
' So that, with vigour got by virtue gone,
' The process of exhaustion still goes on ?

V.

' For whom, for what, so task we, and so fast
' Force into play, an organ that is still
' By nature doomed to disappear at last ?
' For whom, for what, do we its chambers fill
' To bursting with agglomerations vast
' Of notions we must painfully distill
' From facts as painfully acquired ? For whom,
' For what, so nimbly toils Thought's restless loom ?

VI.

' What is it we imagine we can found
 ' From all the crude materials that we throw
 ' Into this furnace of sensation? Bound
 ' To meaner organs, can it be, or know,
 ' Aught by itself? Those feet, that tread the ground
 ' Unconsciously; those muscles, that bestow
 ' Upon the limbs, by their mechanic stress,
 ' A motion that to them is meaningless;

VII.

' Those eyes, that all behold, and nought divine;
 ' Those ears, that hear yet cannot understand;
 ' Those cells of sense that, from the touch so fine
 ' (Thrilling the frame as if a spirit fanned
 ' Each pulse with pinions dipped in airs divine)
 ' Down to the brutal blow that staggers, and
 ' The shock that stuns, do thoughtlessly present
 ' To Thought reports of its environment;

VIII.

' Without such instruments, and without all
 ' Their unintelligent service, is there aught
 ' This proud Intelligence can fairly call
 ' Its own, or as its own dispose of? Nought!
 ' And, if it fain would be no more the thrall
 ' Of its own slaves, where in the world can Thought
 ' A foothold find? Were it once freed from Sense,
 ' What would become of free Intelligence?

IX.

'Effacement! absolute nonentity!
 'Within its prison, a world; outside it, mere
 'Abysmal nothingness! Then, what a lie
 'Must be this boasted freedom! How and where
 'Doth it exist? The moment that we try
 'To treat it as a fact, into the sphere
 'Of fancy it recedes, and in the brain
 'Only a vague idea doth remain:

X.

'Of all ideas, this alone is backed
 'By no reality. All others cling
 'Fast to some base in universal fact,
 'But this can find no base in anything.
 'Whence hath the faculty that doth abstract
 'Essence from semblance, disembodiment
 'From sea and land ideas of wet and dry,
 'Derived that quaint abstraction—Liberty?

XI.

'What fragment of reality attests,
 'Or answers to, or in the least degree
 'Supports it? The idea the sea suggests
 'Flows from the visible flowing of the sea;
 'And on the solid earth securely rests
 'The abstract notion of solidity;
 'In either case there still is something real
 'Which, as it were, bears witness to the ideal;

XII.

'A something manifest to sense, and not
 'Dependent on the idea which the mind
 'Derives from it—a something that hath got
 'A corporal substance, and a place assigned
 'To its existence in some definite spot,
 'Where the idea it suggests can find
 'Corroborative evidence and fit
 'Support in facts that correspond to it.

XIII.

'But what fact corresponds to Liberty?
 'Is it not an abnormity detached
 'From all things that exist in earth or sky?
 'The merest figment of the brain, unmatched,
 'Unwarranted, by aught that ear, or eye,
 'Or touch reveal? A vain chimæra hatched
 'From nothing; which, itself, can nothing be
 'But the negation of reality!

XIV.

'O wretched toil of the Danaïdes!
 'To go on reasoning about everything,
 'And then arrive at nothing! With such ease
 'To reckon what returning stars will bring
 'Eclipses round in vast recurrences
 'Of endless time, or count each quivering
 'Pulse of light's rapid path, yet have no power
 'To walk, oneself, beyond a mile an hour!

XV.

‘To know what springs and valves and ducts keep
going
‘The abundant animal life that never fails
‘To fill the world, yet starve for want of knowing
‘Where to procure a cutlet! The details
‘Of Alexander’s strategy, the glowing
‘Achievements of Napoleon’s Generals,
‘To have completely mastered, and yet be
‘Completely at the mercy of a flea!

XVI.

‘To carry in the registers of thought
‘The elements of Euclid; the commands
‘Of all the Vedas; systems solving nought,
‘And creeds affirming all; the solar bands;
‘All treaties ever signed, or battles fought;
‘The separate functions of nerves, cells, and glands;
‘With Egypt’s one and thirty dynasties,
‘And all the Popes of Rome, and Dukes of Guise;

XVII.

‘And then, because a window or a door
‘Stands open, and the time is cold or wet,
‘To find this carefully-completed store
‘Of acquisitions suddenly upset,
‘Dispersed, and ruined, by a throat that’s sore,
‘A head that aches, a lung that’s on the fret—
‘And Vedas, Pharaohs, Hyksos, Dukes of Guise,
‘And Pontiffs, vanish in a cough or sneeze!’

XVIII.

Such were the undelightful thoughts that threw
 Like gathering clouds, their gloomy influence
 About Emanuel's mind. From study too
 Prolonged, he suffered now a more intense
 Dejection than habitual students do,
 Who are by temperament and preference
 Disposed to sedentary life, as he
 Was formed by nature for activity.

XIX.

Ivor with ardour, as was natural,
 This misanthropic humor combated;
 Maintaining the antithesis of all
 The bitter sayings by Emanuel said;
 And 'O,' he laughed, 'thou craven giant, call
 'Some doughty dwarf thine enterprise to aid!
 'Not all the Faculties, nor all their Deans,
 'Should daunt me, had I half thy ways and means!

XX.

'Yet, certain as thou art of victory
 'Instead of wondering what triumphal arch
 'Will loudest echo "Io Pæan!" why,
 'Like muffled drums that beat a funeral march,
 'These doleful groans? Thou dost with causeless
 sigh
 'But fan a furnace fierce enough to parch
 'Thy brains to cinders. Fuel it no more!
 'Come out, and let us talk our journey o'er!

XXI.

' Instead of thinking so about the old
 ' Bald heads of Heidelberg's assembled Dons,
 ' Think of Mont Blanc, the Jungfrau, and the bold
 ' Assault on those more formidable sons
 ' Of venerable Time, which, as I've told
 ' The coming Lord Glenaveril more than once,
 ' With him the coming Mr. Müller means
 ' To make next month in spite of Dons and Deans !

XXII.

' Think of our expedition in disguise,
 ' (What fun !) and think of Switzerland ! and then
 ' Of Italy's dear azure seas and skies !
 ' And then of Egypt's yellow sands ! And when
 ' Thou hast exhausted all such ecstasies,
 ' Think of this prophecy which I again
 ' Repeat, that thou wilt in a month, nay less,
 ' Have passed this ordeal with immense success !'

XXIII.

Glenaveril's prediction proved quite true,
 And no one was the least surprised at it.
 Nature hath singular caprices. Who
 Can otherwise explain why she thinks fit
 That, of the babes each year brings forth, a few
 (As sure as every year the swallows flit)
 Should, every year, be born rope-dancers ? That's
 What happens, too, with mental acrobats.

XXIV.

The persons who by nature are endowed
Thus from their birth, possess no faculties
That are not also common to the crowd ;
Only, by some instinctive exercise
They force those common gifts, (on all bestowed
In less degree) to an uncommon size
With an uncommon skill ; attaining thus
To a proficiency which startles us.

XXV.

Of all such faculties, the commonest
Is memory. 'Tis indispensable
To all vocations, and in each is best
When it is strongest. Poetry as well
As statesmanship would perish unpossessed
Of this one gift, altho' no miracle
Of memorative power, however great,
A statesman or a poet can create ;

XXVI.

For memory at the best can be no better
Than a good mirror which the intellect
For its own use keeps polished ; the begetter
It is not, of the things it doth reflect.
Yet are there men whose memory to the letter
Can reproduce, with every date correct,
The whole of Mangnall's Questions and the answers :
These men are intellectual rope-dancers.

XXVII.

And every industry, and every art,
And every science, its rope-dancers has.
All rules and formulas they know by heart ;
Of facts they are encyclopedias :
They know what has been writ on every part
Of human knowledge ; they can tell what was
The date and place of every known event,
Or what the use of every instrument ;

XXVIII.

And therefore born librarians are they ;
For of the multitudes of books is none
But what, without an effort, they can say
All it contains ; altho' there is but one,
Of whose contents in any sort of way
The authorship belongs to them alone,
And that's the catalogue. So vast is all
Their knowledge, and the worth of it so small

XXIX.

The highest faculty such men possess
Emanuel possessed to a degree
That all such men might envy. His distress
Was that he knew it, and despised it. He
Viewed with contempt what flatters more or less
The vanity of pedantry—to be
Cropfull of every kind of information,
Yet only capable of compilation.

XXX.

This vehement antipathy between
 His temperament and intellect inspired
 The former with a scorn severe and keen
 For all the latter's rare but undesired
 Superiorities ; which to his mien
 And tone imparted an effect admired
 As modesty—sole virtue with the wit
 To flatter those who do not practise it !

XXXI.

And therefore without envy his success
 Was even by his rivals recognised.
 His character contributed to this :
 His fellow students, with an undisguised
 Habitual matter-of-course off-handedness,
 Regarded him as a convenient-sized
 Well-put-together book of reference,
 That to original thought makes no pretence ;

XXXII.

There, every one the word he wants can find,
 With just sufficient comment and no more :
 And, since it never comes into the mind
 Of any one the volume to explore
 For words that are of an offensive kind,
 Such as, for instance, ' fool,' or ' ass,' or ' bore,'
 So no one is offended, tho' no doubt
 Such words are to be found there, if looked out.

XXXIII.

And thus Emanuel, who never sought
Affection, got it in exchange for what
He neither loved nor valued. There was nought
Which he himself depreciated not
In his own gifts. He loathed the very thought
Of all that from such gifts is to be got.
And in his case a paradox was proved :
He was not lovable, yet he was loved.

XXXIV.

Some fifteen days, or more, were passed away
Since Edelrath Glenaveril's ships had burned
Without remorse, on that unhappy day
When Ivor out of Paradise was turned.
In the report then read from Mathew Grey
The searching eyes of Edelrath discerned
Materials for instructions most minute,
Designed each local circumstance to suit ;

XXXV.

But, like instructions every year sent out
On State Affairs by Offices at home
To Officers abroad, they proved (no doubt
Because of their minuteness) burdensome,
And to the matter which they were about
Completely inappropriate. A tome
Of questions and objections, difficult
To answer, was their natural result ;

XXXVI.

And hence a further correspondence, till
Said Edelrath at last, 'The thing has got
'To such a tangle, dear Glenaveril,
'As can but be unravelled on the spot!'
Ivor asserted that Emanuel still

His presence needed : and his Mentor, not
Contesting the boy's wishes for the nonce,
Resolved to go alone, and go at once.

XXXVII.

The matter thus between himself and Grey
Was settled in a week : and all elate
He had but just returned, when the next day
Emanuel, now a passed licentiate,
Paying the visits he was bound to pay
To all the Dons in ceremonious state,
Called upon Edelrath. With proud delight
The Scholar welcomed his young favourite.

XXXVIII.

'With all my heart,' he said, 'I wish thee joy!
'Though much I grudge the Church a mind so
bright.
'But say, how happens it, forgetful boy,
'That thou didst not remember to invite
'Old Father Edelrath to reëmploy
'His rusty weapons (as I thought 'twas quite
'Settled between us) on the list of those
'Who were invoked thy thesis to oppose?'

XXXIX.

‘My dear Professor, what a question! Why,
‘Your name was foremost on the programme placed,
‘Which duly, with a Latin letter, I
‘Left at your house: a Latin letter graced
‘With all the flowers of that Latinity
‘Whose choicest Ciceronian blossoms waste
‘Their sweetness on this academic air!
‘And here I left that letter, I declare.’

XI.

‘You left it! when?’ ‘If I remember right,
‘It was not long before you went away.
‘The actual date of it I cannot quite
‘Recall; but certainly to Agatha
‘I gave it, fifteen days ago, it might
‘Be more, perhaps. I really cannot say
‘Exactly when. But this I know, I told her
‘To give it you; so, if she did not, scold her!’

LXI.

‘I mean, of course, that you must not scold *me*.’
‘Ha! but,’ said Edelrath, ‘your letter, then,
‘Must, still unopened, on my table be!
‘Too much I prize the products of your pen,
‘Especially in Latin, not to see
‘What has become of it. When was it? when
‘A fortnight say you? Wait! Ho, Agatha!
‘Where is that girl now? Agatha, I say!’

XLII.

And hot, from culinary haunts at hand,
With arms 'neath apron tucked, and cap whose frills
All stiff on the defensive seemed to stand,
Much like the porcupine's proverbial quills,
Agatha entered. Smiling (t'was a Grand
Inquisitor's official smile, that fills
The heart heretical with prescient dread)
Edelrath waved his hand to her, and said,

XLIII.

'What hast thou done, girl, with the letter that
'The Herr Emanuel Müller left with thee
'Some fifteen days ago, he says?' Whereat,
Bridling a little at what seemed to be
A half-rebuke, that damsel answered pat,
'The letter Herr Emanuel left with me,
'The Herr Professor being out that day,
'Upon the Herr Professor's desk I lay.'

XLIV.

Edelrath flushed. A vague sentiment
Of some mischance disturbed him. He subdued
However his first impulse to give vent
To questions it suggested, and said, 'Good!
'The letter must have strayed, 'tis evident:
'But I shall find it in this multitude
'Of papers presently, Emanuel.
'The fault was mine. Go, Agatha! 'Tis well.'

XLV.

But scarcely had Emanuel disappeared
 Ere Edelrath called Agatha again
 Into his room ; and, with a mind that feared
 The truth it was compelled to ascertain,
 ‘Repeat,’ he said, ‘the statement that I heard
 ‘Imperfectly just now, and pray explain,
 ‘My dear good Agatha (no blame to thee,
 ‘The fault was mine !) where can this letter be ?

XLVI.

‘The fact is, Agatha, I’m half afraid,
 (He said this blushing red from cheek to brow)
 ‘That I some dreadful blunder must have made.
 ‘But we must clear this matter up. Come, now,
 ‘The letter, say’st thou, on the desk was laid ?’
 ‘The desk, I think,’ said Agatha. ‘And how ?
 ‘I placed it as I generally place
 ‘All the unopened letters, on its face ;

XLVII.

‘Placed it, that is, with the seal uppermost,
 ‘So that at once the Herr Professor might
 ‘Distinguish it’—‘Ay, ay ! from all the host
 ‘Of open letters left about. Quite right !
 ‘’Tis all mine own disorder that hath cost
 ‘This trouble’—‘And I think, but cannot quite
 ‘Remember,’ Agatha went on, ‘the day
 ‘Before the Herr Professor went away,

XLVIII.

‘ I saw the letter lying on a book
 ‘ Somewhere. But whether it was open then
 ‘ Or shut I cannot say, nor did I look ;
 ‘ The Herr so often having told me, when
 ‘ His room is dusted, neither shelf nor nook
 ‘ Must be disturbed.’ And ‘ Right ! quite right ! ’
 again

Responded Edelrath, with deepening gloom,
 While ruefully his glances roamed the room.

XLIX.

After a moment’s silent cogitation,
 He added artfully, ‘ And, by the way,
 ‘ The more that I think out that indication
 ‘ Of where, when last you looked, the letter lay,
 ‘ The more I feel a growing inclination
 ‘ To think it not improbable I may
 ‘ Have found it after all, and then forgot.
 ‘ I shouldn’t wonder. But it matters not.

L.

‘ Only, if that were so, it strikes me now
 ‘ Thou must have found another letter here,
 ‘ And sealed exactly like it. For I know
 ‘ There *was* just such another, and I fear
 ‘ That in my haste, I must have mixed somehow
 ‘ Those letters, and forgotten one. My dear,
 ‘ Try to remember ! ’ ‘ Ah,’ said Agatha,
 ‘ Mixed and forgot ? most likely, I should say.’

LI.

‘Yes, yes! but think, child! I am so distressed!
‘Try to remember!’—‘The same seal?’ said she.
‘Ay, just the same!’—‘A seal without a crest?’
‘Exactly!’ ‘And two letters, M. and E.?’
‘No, E. and M.!’—‘Yes, E. and M.—addressed
‘In Lord Glenaveril’s writing—let me see,
‘Addressed to Hamburg, was it not?’ ‘Heaven blest
‘Thy wits, girl!’ Edelrath exclaimed, ‘yes! yes!’

LII.

‘To Hamburg, that’s the letter! and, thank Heaven,
‘Thou hast saved us all from a misfortune vast!
‘My dear good Agatha! I knew that even
‘A pin is safe if thou its keeping hast!
‘Go now, and fetch that letter. Thou hast given
‘Ten years of life to me! Run, girl, and fast!’
‘But, Sir,’ said Agatha, ‘I have it not;
‘Again the Herr Professor has forgot.’

LIII.

‘Forgotten what, child?’ ‘What the orders were
‘He gave me when he drove so fast away
‘To catch the train.’ And, thro’ his thin white hair
The pure old Scholar felt, in mute dismay,
Something that like a breath of icy air,
Curdling his brain, began to creep and stray.
He stammered ‘Orders! orders about what?
‘What did I tell thee? I remember not.’

LIV.

‘But I,’ said Agatha, ‘can still recall
‘The very words of them. You said to me
“Upon my table there are several
“Letters which must be posted. Two or three
“Are mine, the rest Milord’s. Our stamps are all
“Exhausted. Take them to the post, and see
“That they are weighed before you pay them,
please.”
‘And so I did. So set your mind at ease.’

LV.

‘Ah,’ faltered Edelrath, ‘at ease! Well, well,
‘No matter! But how many letters, say,
‘Were lying on my table? Can you tell?
‘Letters I mean, girl, for the post that day,
‘For we must be exact if possible.’
‘Of course!’ said Agatha. ‘I had to pay
‘One thaler twenty groschen at the post
‘For stamps, and that’s exactly what they cost.

LVI.

‘And all of it is entered in my book :
‘The stamps, the number of the letters too.
‘But only wait a moment! I’ll go look.’
She left the room; and, like a culprit who
Awaits his doom, her luckless master shook
From head to foot, as he gasped faintly ‘Do!’
And sank into his chair, and bit his nails,
Sighing ‘The last hope left! and if it fails?’

LVII.

The unfortunate mistake that he had made
Was slowly growing clearer to his mind.
If only St. Augustine had betrayed
That pretty sinner! But the Saint was kind,
And now Glenaveril's letter, by his aid,
Was doubtless speeding on its way to find
Cordelia's heart, and play the devil there,
While poor Emanuel's missive—O despair!

LVIII.

'Alas, alas!' groaned Edelrath, 'alas,
'The wiles of the Unconscious! What avail
'Precautions against Fate? and what an ass
'Have I been, in the best design to fail
'By the worst oversight that ever was!
'Dolt! idiot! what a pitiable tale
'Of blunders! Fatal was the hour when I
'Defied the footsteps of Fatality!'

LIX.

Here Agatha, returning cried 'There! look!
'Twenty-five groschen for two letters, see!
'Tis all correctly entered in the book.
'Then, for three letters—Lord Glenaveril's three—'
'What! what!' cried Edelrath, and trembling took
The book she offered,—'Two—' 'No, no,' said
she
'Not two! three letters! Lord Glenaveril's score.
'And that's as sure as two and two make four!'

LX.

'Good heavens!' groaned Edelrath, and sank again
Into his chair. 'O human vanity!
'O blind Pythagoras! O science vain!
'Arithmetic thou, too, art all a lie!
'For look you here, now! Two and two, 'tis plain
'Make four no longer. The Three Fates defy
'All Rules of Three, and furtively contrive
'That two and two shall make, not four, but five!'

END OF BOOK THE SECOND.

BOOK THE THIRD.

THE ALPS.

CANTO I.—LIFE'S METAMORPHOSES.

CANTO II.—MARIETTA'S NEEDLE.

CANTO III.—THE CATASTROPHE

CANTO IV.—DEATH'S METAMORPHOSES.

BOOK THE THIRD

THE AIR

CHAPTER I—THE AIR
CHAPTER II—THE AIR
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CHAPTER IV—THE AIR

BOOK THE THIRD.

CANTO I.

LIFE'S METAMORPHOSES.

I.

ALL ye who roam abroad, what seek ye there?
Change? But in search of change what need to
 roam?
For change to every one comes everywhere,
And comes unsought. Then, why not stay at home?
Surely, at home, enough of change it were
 Simply to live, letting time go and come,
While hourly fleet the banks on either side
Of life's continually flowing tide!

II.

Home changes are, at least, safe-harvested
By love unchanged. Their soft succession hides
Their harsh effects. The smile of summers fled
Still in the winter-wrinkled face abides:
Some lingering charm to deck the whitened head,
Habit, Time's old familiar friend, provides:
And, less like Summer gone than Autumn come,
Age follows Youth with Memory's harvest home.

III.

All ye who roam abroad, what is it ye do ?

Gaps you create : one in your own lives, one
Among their lives who miss you. Ah, the two

Will (never doubt it !) both be filled anon ;
Filled, and, as soon as filled, put out of view !

Closed up, as open graves are, by a stone
That hides what it was meant to indicate,
The confined corpse beneath its name and date !

IV.

Care for the absent soon becomes, at best,

The Campo Santo of a convent ; paved
With mortuary slabs, so oft pressed

By heedless steps that the inscriptions graved
Across them can be neither traced nor guessed ;

For even the mute memorials that once craved
Some charitable memory of the dead,
Life treads away with unremembering tread :

V.

All but the first and last words are effaced :

' *Here lyeth* '—that is all the first words say,
And '*Pray for him !*' in mockery say the last,

And all between is rubbed and worn away ;
There, once some cherished effigy was traced,

But form, and face, and features, where are they ?
The dead man's image from his smooth grave stone,
And with his image even his name, is gone !

VI.

Whither, O wanderers, whither do ye go?

The smallest streamlets never miss their way,
Roam where they will about the world ; but who

Of all earth's human travellers can say
What end the path he treads will take him to?

One goal there is which all must reach some day,
Whether they go abroad or stay at home ;
But to get there, what need have ye to roam?

VII.

Sons, brothers, fathers, husbands, friends, depart :

O'er their departure many a sorrowing eye
Hath wept '*farewell!*' and many an aching heart

Hath sighed '*God speed!*' What loving lip will cry
'*Welcome!*' where they are going? Friends they start,

And strangers they return. Return! ah, why?
Tired pilgrims, have ye found not what ye sought?
Yes, but the search was all, the finding nought!

VIII.

'Tis nailed all over,' said Emanuel,

'Just like a Bishop's Coffin!' He was eyeing
A Chamouni boot; a perfect miracle

Of cobblery, contrived for fortifying
The human foot in a thick-hided shell,

Such as the Athenian cobbler was for trying
Upon the walls of Athens, to test whether
Stone has the most resisting power, or leather.

IX.

This formidable boot was one of two
By Chamouni's best bootmaker just made
For the complete equipment of the new
Earl of Glenaveril. 'I am certain,' said
That personage, continuing his review
Of its peculiarities, with head
Set on the critical slant, 'that all this mass
'Of iron knobs was meant to shoe an ass !

X.

'What is the use of fashioning a boot
'To imitate Achilles' shield? 'Tis all
'The vanity of that conceited brute,
'The irrepressible periodical
'Swiss Tourist ; whom it pleases to impute
'To these poor pimples, that are Nature's small
'Defects, all sorts of dangers quite confined,
'If they exist, to his own boastful mind ;

XI.

'Or is it, like our cavalry cuirasses,
'Only a reminiscence that has grown
'Into a decoration which surpasses
'Absurdity by inconvenience? Own
'That, if you chanced to slip down the crevasses
'Ready to gulp you, not a single one
'Of these big nails would be of service found,
'Though all are useless upon level ground !'

XII.

Said Ivor who, with file in hand, meanwhile,
 Sharpening an alpenstock, beside him sat,
 'Scorn not precaution!' And with acrid smile,
 'Precaution,' said Emanuel, 'what is that?
 'Certificated accident! The tile,
 'Whose fall, to-day, by chance hath missed your hat,
 'Chance may, to-morrow, help to cleave your pate!
 'Precaution comes too soon or else too late;

XIII.

'Last winter by a miracle, without
 'A muffler, you escaped a lung disease,
 'And therefore all this summer, go about
 'Wrapped up from chest to chin.' 'Ah well, in
 these
 'Swiss tours,' said Ivor, 'twill not do to flout
 'Precaution. Every guide in this agrees;
 'And wherefore, dear Emanuel, be ashamed'—
 'Stop! Call me not Emanuel,' he exclaimed,

XIV.

'Call me, My Lord! My title is defined
 'In our convention, and I hold to it!
 'Earl of Glenaveril, am I now! And mind
 'That you address me always as 'tis fit
 'My Secretary should. I'm not inclined
 'To waive my novel rank one jot or whit.
 '*Noblesse oblige!* tho', doubtless, in what way
 'It is obliging, it were hard to say.'

XV.

'Inveterate scoffer ! born misanthropist !'
 Said Ivor, laughing, 'for full well I know
 'Thou from thy sarcasms wouldst not desist
 'On all that goes with noble birth, if thou
 'Couldst even trace thine own back to the list
 'Of Christendom's first Barons !' 'Anyhow,'
 Emanuel answered, 'I myself should be
 'In that case last of all their pedigree ;

XVI.

'And by the simple fact of being last
 'I should confer upon society
 'A blessing greater even than the vast
 'Amount of mischief done in days gone by
 'By the whole tribe of them.' 'Go on ! thou hast,'
 Said Ivor, 'in thy wit's whole armoury
 'No weapon strong enough to overthrow
 'The sway of thine own nature ! That I know.

XVII.

'Thou art, in fact, a born aristocrat
 'In all save birth : aristocrat in all
 'Thy tastes and tendencies, no matter what
 'The motive be that urges thee to call
 'Thyself a democrat, although so flat
 'The contradiction by thy natural
 'And genuine self continually given
 'To that affected character, thank Heaven !

XVIII.

‘Nor else would I have coaxed thee to comply
‘With this experimental transposition
‘Of names and titles. Thou dost not deny
‘(Nay more ! thou dost affirm) that the transmission
‘Of an inherited capacity
‘Hath made the bee a skilled geometrician ;
‘Yet to life’s noblest orders dost impute
‘The want of gifts conceded to the brute !’

XIX.

‘Ah, first of all,’ replied Emanuel,
‘We must distinguish, and agree upon
‘The use of terms. And pray consider well
‘What is transmitted. Bees, from sire to son,
‘(Or, to speak strictly by the oracle,
‘Mother to daughter) have been going on
‘Transmitting what I venture to define
‘As Beeism. Excuse the term, ’tis mine.

XX.

‘Examine it, however, and you’ll find
‘(Putting aside the Queen Bee who, in fact,
‘Is only the whole commonwealth’s combined
‘Maternity into one insect packed)
‘That Beeism is the completest kind
‘Of organised equality. Abstract
‘From our *Noblesse* the most you can refer
‘To its hereditary character,

XXI.

‘And what it yields is the perpetuation
‘Of inequality.’ ‘Whereby’ replied
Glenaveril, ‘it makes no deviation
‘From the great law of growth exemplified
‘By Nature, that complete Impersonation
‘Of Inequality!’ ‘Yes, doubtless,’ cried
Emanuel, ‘in individual cases,
‘But never in the usages of races!’

XXII.

‘Who ever saw a calf of tender age
‘Accepted as the hereditary head
‘Of the whole herd that to its pasturage
‘Was by the bull, his father, fitly led?
‘What instinct, still derived from its first stage
‘Hath our Nobility inherited?
‘An instinct, whose relief the law refuses,
‘Of using swords—which nobody now uses!’

XXIII.

‘And is it thou, O philosophic friend,
Retorted Ivor, ‘who art thus content
‘A prejudiced position to defend
‘With such a mere pretence at argument?
‘From sterile heights the torrent may descend,
‘But there is grandeur even in its descent,
‘Simply because the source of it was high.
‘Whence comes stagnation? From equality!’

XXIV.

'Rome to the headsprings of the Apennine
'Raised aqueducts, whereby the waters ran,
'Keeping the freshness of their origin,
'To slake the thirst of lips republican
'With purity unsoiled by the supine
'Maremmas. As the source is, so the man :
'To every highborn progeny belong
'Some qualities not common to the throng :

XXV.

'And, be it never so degenerate,
'In Aristocracy doth still exist
'A something fine, from every other state
'And form of social growth still vaguely missed :
'The vulgar, even when they affect to hate,
'Admire it, nor its influence can resist ;
'Instinctively to its possessors they
'A deference, that proclaims a difference, pay.'

XXVI.

'His Lordship's breakfast is prepared below !'
The waiter, entering, to Emanuel said,
With a profoundly deferential bow ;
And then, suspending his obsequious tread,
He added, 'And the Guides are waiting now
'His Excellency's orders.' 'Good !' his head
Emanuel nodded. 'Let them wait till I
'Can send Herr Müller to them by and by.'

XXVII.

Then turning, as the waiter at that word
The chamber left, 'There, Ivor! there,' said he,
'From that man's lips thou hast mine answer heard!
'Hope nothing from the vulgar! Power to be
'Responsive to distinction is conferred
'Only on those who are distinguished. See,
'The vulgar have it not! Between us two,
'What difference did that man proclaim just now?

XXVIII.

'Each daily circumstance of his vocation
'Must to the highest point it can attain
'Have trained his faculty of observation;
'Yet his vulgarity upon us twain,
'Since our arrival here, without cessation
'Has exercised that faculty in vain!
'In thee the essence of nobility
'Its source reveals: a born plebeian I:

XXIX.

'Yet see! It is enough that I display
'A title men suppose to be mine own,
'And indiscriminately fling away
'Donations, in the vilest taste; and down
'To earth men bow before me, as if they
'In me revered the very roof and crown
'Of human nature; while on thee, poor friend,
'Not even a glance can they afford to spend!

XXX.

'Thou knowest,' he continued with a sigh,
'That to perfection of whatever kind
'No man is more susceptible than I.
'What saddens and dismays me is to find
'That everywhere the highest faculty,
'Whether it be of body or of mind,
'Has no hereditary place on earth,
'No aristocracy secured by birth.

XXXI.

'The noblest artist is the first and last
'Of his own kind : on the philosopher
'All the philosophies of all the past
'No cognizable ancestors confer :
'The great creative poet dies at last
'With no legitimate inheritor.
'Ah, if the Montmorenci of the mind
'Had but the power to propagate their kind !

XXXII.

'Or even the Comneni of the plough !'
This groan Glenaveril echoed with a sigh ;
'Nature,' he said, 'is blind, and doth bestow
'Her gifts by chance.' 'No, Ivor ! I deny
'That Nature,' cried Emanuel all aglow
With combative rebuke to that reply,
'Does anything by chance. There is no room
'For chance in Nature. Natural chance means Doom.

XXXIII.

' We call that Nature which we understand ;
' And what we understand not we call Chance,
' Using the word that's readiest at hand
' To fill the place of our own ignorance.
' Not inadvertently hath Nature planned
' And fast established the inheritance
' By safe transmission, in this race or that,
' Of almond eyes, and noses hooked or flat ;

XXXIV.

' And tell me not the Power that can secure
' This permanence of type in nose and eyes
' Is powerless to perpetuate the pure
' Inheritance of higher faculties
' Than sight or smell ! No, no ! 'tis we, be sure,
' By some perversity, which I surmise
' Might be corrected if we knew but how,
' Forfeit the gifts that Power would fain bestow.

XXXV.

' Ah, if we only trusted Nature more !
' Doth not the saxifrage select a soil
' No other plant could thrive in, and thence pour
' About her affluent stem a dancing coil
' Of dainty bells ? Who knows ? in every score
' Of noble dames, is one, perchance, the spoil
' Of circumstance unsuited to her case,
' An unguessed saxifrage born out of place !

XXXVI.

' A saxifrage constrained to waste away
' Because 'tis planted in too rich an earth
' For its development ! And who can say
' How many a natural duchess her vile birth
' On vicious paths condemns to go astray
' Obscurely, whose else-unpolluted worth
' With every grace and virtue might adorn
' Some coronet perchance less nobly worn ?

XXXVII.

' 'Tis said, in mockery of a certain race,
' Its custom is before the opening eyes
' Of every child, as soon as born, to place
' A fiddle and a purse. If the child tries
' To clutch the fiddle, in that lucky case
' 'Tis reared as a musician : if it eyes
' The purse first, its vocation then must be
' A thief's. The child's choice is accounted free.

XXXVIII.

' An unavowed confession in the terms
' Of this ill-natured pleasantry I find.
' What of a single people spite affirms,
' Custom on all inflicts. Though undesigned,
' The moral's true. The bent of human germs
' We all ignore ; and Childhood's heart and mind
' Must needs to Custom pay the ruinous price
' Exacted by Parental Prejudice !

XXXIX.

'No! I repeat, 'tis Ignorance that doth balk
'The hand of Nature; tho' by humouring it
'Cattle short-horned, and hogs too fat to walk,
'Our scientific breeders have the wit
'To generate; and how boastfully we talk
'Of these monstrosities, as if 'twere fit
'The human breed should lack that choice selection
'Which brings a Yorkshire ham to its perfection!'

XL.

'Well,' said Glenaveril, laughing as he rose,
'The problem's one of opportunity;
'And for my part, to solve it, I propose,
'That we forthwith to breakfast go! for I
'Begin to feel a hungry germ that grows
'Impatient for its provident supply
'Of suitable and timely nourishment.
'*Allons!*' And arm in arm the two friends went.

XLI.

A pleasant meal was their repast, and gay,
Spread in a bright embrasure of the hall
That served for general dining-room. The day
Was but a few hours old, and cloudless. All
As green as emerald in the clear light lay,
Glittering and glooming underneath a wall
Of radiant whiteness, roofed by a blue sky,
The incomparable Vale of Chamouni.

XLII.

A pungent fragrance from the mountain pine
And the wet grass embalmed the buxom air ;
Fronting the casement, in the fresh sunshine,
Mont Blanc a spacious billowy sheet of bare
Smooth snow against the ethereal hyaline
Spread like a splendid sail, as if he were
About to launch from an ice-built embrasure
His buoyant mass into the aëry azure.

XLIII.

The time invited an ascent : but still,
The two friends had decided, first of all
Before attempting it, to test their skill
And strength in some comparatively small
And easy enterprise ; enough to fill
This day and next, from noon till even fall,
Pleasantly with a picturesque excursion
Involving, said their Guides, no great exertion.

XLIV.

Meanwhile, the empty hall wherein was spread
Their early meal, grew crowded by degrees.
As tutors with small tribes of boys to lead,
Young couples, and mamas with families,
Came strolling in to breakfast, or to read
The list of new arrivals. Among these
One family there was that seemed to be
North German, doubtless of the *Bourgeoisie* ;

XLV.

Such looked, at least, the type of all save one ;
They took their places at a table set
Near that whereby Glenaveril now alone
Was sitting ; for Emanuel, to get
His preparations for the morning done,
Had gone upstairs, in his new part as yet
But ill at ease ; and thus, he chanced to quit
The hall as those late comers entered it.

XLVI.

The family consisted of a man
Of middle age, in whose good-humoured face
A shrewd expression more American
Than German it was possible to trace ;
His wife, a buxom dame of full-blown span,
And not without a certain comely grace ;
Two little girls, his daughters, you might guess ;
And with them their young English governess.

XLVII.

This information, with an air discreet,
The landlord was communicating now
To a young Austrian officer, whose seat
Fronting Glenaveril's, faced that family row.
Twirling his moustache, a miraculous feat
In waxwork, the young dandy lifted slow
Eyeglass to eye, with supercilious stare,
Enquiring what his fellow-travellers were.

XLVIII.

'The sauce seems better than the fish!' said he
In answer to the landlord's information,
'And that young governess might really be
'A princess, whose ideal occupation
'Is to lead lambs about in Arcady!
'Her lambs should have pink ribbons, decoration
'Would much improve them; but their shepherdess
'Looks charming in her very simple dress.'

XLIX.

The landlord, chuckling, answered, 'True, Herr Graf!
'Persons of that condition now-a-days
'Have airs and graces that would make you laugh,
'Did you but know, as we do, all their ways.
'But 'tis our business to know grain from chaff,
'And no assumed distinction ever pays
'With us, I promise you! No, I can tell
'With half an eye the genuine article!'

L.

The Herr Graf nodded. 'Ah, no doubt you can!'
He said with a slight accent of disdain.
'Well, we might make a bargain, honest man,
'And you should for yourself keep all the grain;
'Give me the chaff. I like it better than
'Your genuine article.' Mine host, again
Chuckling replied, with sundry nods and winks,
'Ay, ay, that's natural! 'tis a pretty minx!

LI.

‘ But governesses with such lips and eyes
‘ Are little devils ! there’s no doubt of that.
‘ Once they get into noble families,
‘ Heaven knows what pranks their eyes and lips
are at !
‘ And by the way, Herr Graf, just scrutinize
‘ The couple yonder ! There’s a proof of what
‘ I’m saying. Do you see them sitting there ?
‘ Both looking as if bored to death they were !

LII.

‘ The husband studying the *Figaro*,
‘ Only for an excuse to turn his back
‘ Upon his wife ! And she—ah, notice, do,
‘ With what a fretful wearisome tic-tac
‘ She opes and shuts that bracelet ! You must know
‘ The lady was (a year ago, good lack !)
‘ One of those pretty governesses ; well,
‘ In love with her, of course, the young Graf fell,

LIII.

‘ And so——’ But here the landlord’s accents grew
More confidential and less audible,
As he proceeded to impart some new
Detail which, doubtless, it was just as well
To whisper only. Ivor never knew
The end of that romance, which, truth to tell,
He had indifferently overheard
Without attending to a single word ;

LIV.

For he, meanwhile, was deeply studying
His Alpine map, and from it jotting down
Into his notebook every little thing
About his journey. So the words had flown,
As idly heard as insects on the wing,
About his ears with that monotonous drone
Which lulls a mind on other thoughts intent.
And still Glenaveril o'er his map was bent,

LV.

When, without even pausing, as he passed,
His message to deliver, in a tone
Pertly betokening his impatient haste
Upon some other business to be gone,
A waiter, with a glance behind him cast,
Exclaimed, 'Herr Müller, if your meal is done,
'My lord Glenaveril says he wants the key
'Of his portmanteau. You can give it me.'

I.VI.

'I'll take it him myself,' Glenaveril said,
'And that immediately. You need not stop.'
Then quietly the map, before him spread,
Into his pocketbook he folded up,
And rose to go. But, as he turned his head,
The little clatter of a broken cup
Stopped him, and there he stayed—beneath a spell
Whose sudden sorcery was invincible:

LVII.

In the same moment, starting from her seat
With a glad gesture of such passionate stress
That the half-lifted tea-cup to her feet
Fell as she rose, a girl (now motionless
As he himself) stood, statuelike. Her sweet
Young face, rose-flushed, her simple soft grey dress,
Were inundated and illumined all
With a delight divinely virginal ;

LVIII.

Her gaze was fixed upon Glenaveril,
Suffused and radiant with a silent joy
So deep, so pure, so perfect, and so still,
That he, all quivering, and not knowing why
His whole frame trembled with a mystic thrill,
Uttered a glad involuntary cry ;
A cry revealing by its vehemence
The swift recovery of some long-lost sense !

LIX.

'Twas but a moment : and, for all but two,
Less than a moment. No one else perceived
Anything more than a young lady who,
Having upset a tea-cup, shocked and grieved
At the disaster, had sprung up to view
What injury her dress might have received
From her own awkwardness : a natural act
Originating in a clumsy fact.

LX.

A moment only ! But to those embraced
Within the moment's meaning, what a vast
Eternity of feeling then effaced
All the familiar landmarks around past,
Present and future confidently traced
By Use and Wont ! and what a furnace-blast
From the Creative Fiat breathed sublime
Thro' that one momentary sigh of time !

LXI.

As thus she stood—her fluctuous image swayed
A little backward in a curve enchanting,
Whose buoyant undulating grace was made
Firm in its fairy poise by the down-slanting
Arm that, behind her, on the chair still laid
A hand to prop what seemed a sea-wave panting
Upon its highest pinnacle before
It bursts in spray on the expectant shore ;

LXII.

As thus she stood—a rippling tremour heaved
Each little loosened tress, as if some nerve
In every single hair had just received
A message from her heart to make it curve
And quiver with a bliss that round her weaved
One of those aureoles whose beams preserve
The else-lost tradition of Beatitude,
Making a Heaven in human flesh and blood ;

LXIII.

As thus she stood—could they have seen her there,
 The painter would have flung his pencil by,
 The sculptor dropped his chisel in despair,
 Avowing that Life only can supply
 What, to discover it, Art everywhere
 Searches Creation with inquisitive eye
 And restless hand, in vain—the master-key
 To Beauty's supernatural mystery!

LXIV.

But for a moment only, and no more,
 The vision lasted—for a moment all
 Throbbing and palpitating to the core
 Of its quick essence with an augural
 Sensation of some promised bliss that bore
 No name as yet—a moment which the fall
 Of one word finished. As from a rose-tree
 A rosebud falls, it fell. That word was '*He!*'

LXV.

Quick, the next minute, the suspended flow
 Of common life renewed its idle play
 Just as before, save for the lingering glow
 Given by a word which nothing could unsay
 To a discovery nothing could undo.
 Mechanically Ivor went his way,
 Mounted the stair, Emanuel's chamber found,
 Entered it, and stared vacantly around.

LXVI.

'What ails thee?' cried Emanuel. 'At midday
'Do I behold Precaution, on whose wise
'Cool wits depends the safety of our way
'Walking asleep?' And, in dismayed surprise,
Glenaveril started, like a man who lay
Safe in his bed when last he closed his eyes,
But, waking, finds himself, he knows not how,
Seated upon his housetop in the snow.

LXVII.

'Tis strange!' he murmured with a dreamy sigh.
'Extremely strange!' Emanuel replied;
'Thy face would lead to the discovery
'Of Hamlet's secret. Garrick in his pride
'Could not have better played the part. But why
'So scared, Glenaveril? Wilt thou not confide
'In thine Horatio? Hast thou seen the stately
'But buried Majesty of Denmark, lately?'

LXVIII.

'Good heavens, Emanuel! how shall I explain
'What hath o'erwhelmed me?' gasped Glenaveril;
'Oh, I could blush for shame! The cure was vain.
'I deemed myself recovered. That my will
'Should be so weak! Such a relapse again!
'Relapse?' Emanuel laughed, 'What, dreaming
still?
'Thou never a worse malady hast had
'Than influenza. Is it now so bad?

LXIX.

‘ Poor fellow ! sneeze then ! Don’t apologize,
 ‘ They say that sneezing clears the intellect ! ’
 And Ivor answered, with reproachful eyes,
 ‘ Thy remedy is cruel, but its effect
 ‘ Complete. Emanuel, yes ! these pleasantries
 ‘ Are merited ; for I myself suspect
 ‘ I am insane. Yet, sane or not, just now
 ‘ I saw Cordelia. That is all I know.’

LXX.

Emanuel burst into a laughing-fit
 So loud and long it shook the window-glass.
 ‘ Really this fooling is too exquisite !
 ‘ Imagine me, true son as ever was
 ‘ Of Germany’s dear dreamland, forced to sit
 ‘ Preaching plain common sense (in vain alas !)
 ‘ To an illustrious countryman of Mill
 ‘ And Bentham ! Think of that, Glenaveril !’

LXXI.

He had sunk, convulsed with laughter, in his chair,
 At what to him seemed hugely whimsical
 In this idea. But, with graver air,
 He added ‘ Try, dear Ivor, once for all
 ‘ To free thy wits from the disastrous snare
 ‘ Of that incipient madness, poets call
 ‘ Imagination—to excuse the crimes
 ‘ Against good sense committed by their rhymes !’

LXXII.

' This wild ridiculous romance, concerted
' Most probably for mischief of some kind,
' And, thanks to Father Edelrath, averted—
' How can it possibly o'er thy clear mind
' So tyrannous an influence have exerted
' That, go where'er thou wilt, thou needs must find
' The world, as if Creation shared thy craze,
' Completely peopled with Cordelias?

LXXIII.

' Glenaveril, thou art like an auctioneer
' I heard of once—a man of statement bold,
' But limited invention—who, whene'er
' The subject of the picture that he sold
' Happened to be a woman whose head-gear
' Or gown contained in any casual fold
' An Oriental character, baptized it
' "Judith": and as he named it so he prized it.

LXXIV.

' For him (a mania, it appears to me)
' All womankind had but one thing to do :
' Just to be Judith, or else not to be.
' It strikes me that 'tis much the same with you ;
' Only you change the name. And I can see
' That you will soon become a maniac too,
' If thus'— But here Glenaveril with a rush
' Drew him towards the window, whispering 'Hush!'

LXXV.

Outside, before the porch of the hotel,
 A carriage stood ; five persons into it
 Were stepping ; Ivor recognised them well ;
 And, all his face with sudden blushes lit,
 ‘ Look there ! ’ he whispered to Emanuel,
 ‘ The last to enter—where the children sit—
 ‘ ’Tis *she* ! Thy face, behind this curtain, screen !
 ‘ I would not for the world that we were seen ! ’

LXXVI.

The smile of mockery that was hovering
 About Emanuel’s features suddenly
 Died as he followed Ivor’s gaze. ‘ Poor thing ! ’
 He murmured with a half-compassionate sigh,
 ‘ A governess, no doubt ! But wherefore cling
 ‘ To these insane delusions, Ivor ? Why,
 ‘ The girl’s no more Cordelia, that is clear,
 ‘ Poor child, than yonder *bourgeois* is King Lear !

LXXVII.

‘ No matter ! This world’s mysteries embrace
 ‘ A sacred confraternity unknown
 ‘ ’Twixt Beauty, Genius, Suffering, Grandeur, Grace.
 ‘ The initiated have, and they alone,
 ‘ The password of its secret. Earth they pace
 ‘ As strangers ; but each other by a tone,
 ‘ A glance, they recognise ; and then, alas,
 ‘ With that exchange of signals on they pass !

LXXVIII.

' They pass, and meet no more ! Poor girl, no doubt
' She too the parssword knows. Well, let her be !
' What is the world's stupidity about,
' When it plants lilies, out of place as she,
' In its potato-fields ? Let us go out !'
He cried abruptly. ' These things frighten me.
' They make me shiver. Stay not ! Let us go
' And warm ourselves—at the eternal snow !

LXXIX.

' Come ! To the glaciers ! There, Eternity
' Hath hidden Nature's warmth. My heart is cold !
And turning with a quick impatient sigh,
On Ivor's arm he laid an eager hold.
Glenaveril followed him without reply,
Lost in the maze of his own manifold
Sensations ; while Emanuel muttered still,
' To the great glaciers ! Come, Glenaveril !'

CANTO II.

MARIETTA'S NEEDLE.

I.

'No! bless you, no! The level here is seven
'Thousand three hundred two and thirty feet
'Above the sea, and so we're still from heaven
'A long way off. You're not the least bit beat,
'However, tho' we've done it all in even
'Less than the time I reckoned. You'll compete
'With old Jacques Balmat,* if you keep this pace.
'Ah, yes! that yonder is the *Mer de Glace*.

* 'Jacques Balmat was the first who made the ascent of Mont Blanc. When he disappeared in 1835 he was 70 years old. He went out with a hunter of Valorsine to chase the chamois, parted from him near the Pic du Midi, having proposed an ascent which the other thought too dangerous; but poor Jacques was from his youth a gold-finder; one who believed it possible to become suddenly rich by such a discovery. He always preferred to follow this phantasy rather than act as guide, and he paid for it the forfeit of his life.'—*Murray's Handbook*.

II.

' Now follow, please, my hand from left to right !
 ' To-morrow we shall to the *Jardin* get ;
 ' 'Tis like an emerald brooch upon the white
 ' Breast of *Talèfre's* great glacier neatly set.
 ' Yonder you see *Lechaud*. A goodish height !
 ' Ten thousand and nine hundred—(wait a bit !)
 ' Nine hundred, fourteen feet. The small *Jorasse*,
 ' Its neighbour, quite another thousand has.

III.

' Look this way now, a little further on !
 ' There stands the great *Jorasse* ; whose height
 may be
 ' Full thirteen thousand feet and more. Anon
 ' *Mont Mallet* and the *Giant's Needle* see !
 ' You mark that glacier gleaming in the sun ?
 ' That is *Tacul*. Just like an ogre's knee,
 ' Or a great jetty whitened by the hoary
 ' Surge that it cleaves, observe yon promontory !

IV.

' Above it, like a lighthouse on a cliff,
 ' Stands the *Tour Ronde*. And now attention, pray !
 ' There soars the wonder of all wonders ! If
 ' You doubt it, you must climb *Mont Blanc* some day.
 ' High as it is, the climb is not so stiff ;
 ' Just fifteen thousand seven hundred—Heh !
 ' Take care my lord ! Take care ! Don't stand so
 near !
 ' Those stones are loose. The precipice is sheer.

V.

'If your foot slips, you'll break your neck before
 'You've time to say Goddam; which is, I'm told,
'The English Paternoster!' With this roar
 Of warning, the Alps' showman here seized hold
Upon Emanuel who (whilst, chatting o'er
 A pic-nic feast just done, the Guides made bold
To do the honours of the Alps) had strayed
Away from that statistical parade.

VI.

The official information tacked to each
 Peak he beheld, vile portraits of them prized
By tourists, and the Guides' monotonous screech
 Of introduction to them, vulgarized
The whole horizon far as sight could reach;
 And he had wandered off, with undisguised
Impatience, hoping thus to find alone
Some point of view that he might call his own.

VII.

For the unwelcome caution just received
 His thanks were curt and cold, as he sat down
A little further on. The Old Guide, grieved
 By the marked want of gratitude thus shown
To his remonstrance, now returning, heaved
 A sort of grumbling sigh, half grunt, half groan,
And, gulping down a bumper of Medoc,
Growled 'They are all just like Flüelen's clock!'

VIII.

‘What’s that?’ said Ivor. ‘It strikes noon,’ he said,
‘Three hours ere sunrise. You know, *Herr Student*,
‘Easy to see that *you* were born and bred
‘In Germany, where folks are reverent
‘And do as they are told! But there’s no head
‘In England, because every man is bent
‘On being first, and upon going where
‘None ever went before him, over there!

IX.

‘They’d rather go, those English, to the deuce,
‘Than not go on!’ Glenaveril, as again
He filled the glass which, after this abuse
Of its proprietor, the Guide was fain
To empty, answered, ‘There’s no sort of use
‘In lecturing his lordship to abstain
‘From anything which he is bent upon.
‘He knows what he’s about. Let him alone!

X.

‘Research is what he lives for. We’ve time yet.
‘Thy brother François’ cabin is so near,
‘Where we’re to pass the night! The sun’s not set.
‘Tell me the legend, I still long to hear,
‘About that curious peak we paused to get
‘A longer view of as we passed it. Queer
‘And quaint, you said, the story is, and all
‘About the German Kobold, Rubezahl;

XI.

‘As I’m his countryman, that interests me.
‘I fancied the traditional domain
‘Of this Gnome King, whose German pedigree
‘Our people universally maintain,
‘Extended not beyond the Hartz. How he
‘Hath found his way across the Alps I’m fain
‘To learn. Hath Switzerland no less well known
‘Goblin, or gnome, that she can call her own?’

XII.

‘I never heard of any,’ said the Guide.
‘Sir, the Swiss people are enlightened men;
‘The Powers of Darkness never could abide
‘Enlightened people. Only, now and then,
‘Makers of books insist on being plied
‘By us with silly stories which again
‘They tell, themselves, and call them popular.
‘Once printed, articles of faith they are !

XIII.

‘That’s how it happens that an annual
‘Migration of sightseers who would not care
‘To look at our magnificent Town Hall
‘Just finished at Geneva, come to stare
‘And rave about a bit of ruined wall
‘Whose only source of interest is that there
‘Some villanous deed is said to have been done
‘Ages ago ; or else some ugly stone,

XIV.

' Which no one but the Devil himself, they say,
' Could have removed—from where it never was,
' And placed—where it has ever been ! They pay
' For what we tell them, so these stories pass
' From mouth to mouth. And I am bound to say
' That, owing to such tales, the Devil has
' To us poor devils been a better friend
' Than all the Saints. I hope I don't offend !

XV.

' As for the legend that I spoke about,
' Of Marietta's Needle, if you will,
' Why here it is ! You'll understand, no doubt,
' I don't believe a word of it. But still
' I tell it as I've heard it.' Then, without
A moment's pause having contrived to fill
And empty a fresh glass, the shrewd old man
Smacked his moist lips, and thus his tale began :

XVI.

' This Rubezahl, whom you in Germany
' Call King of Gnomes, as I've been often told,
' And whom, to say the truth, for my part, I
' Suspect to have been simply a rich, old
' Proprietor of silver mines (since gold
' Not even Rubezahl, were he to try,
' In either Swiss or German soil could find !)
' You may have heard, was lovingly inclined.

XVII.

‘ The old Goblin could not set sheep’s eyes upon
‘ A comely wench but what he lost his head—
‘ Or lost his heart—no matter, ’tis all one !
‘ Tho’ many a maiden by the nose had led
‘ The great soft-hearted, lubberly Devil’s-son,
‘ Nothing could wean him from his wish to wed
‘ A Christian woman ; and he had the power
‘ To give his bride, at least, a splendid dower.

XVIII.

‘ Well, here in Chamouni (a village then)
‘ A pretty little peasant girl, whose name
‘ Was Marietta, this big Devilkin
‘ Was so enamoured of that he became
‘ Extremely troublesome. No matter when
‘ Or where (so pertinacious was the flame
‘ He cherished for the little maiden) she
‘ Set foot abroad, there at her side, was he.

XIX.

‘ The poor child found this most embarrassing,
‘ And mainly on account of a young man
‘ With whom she had exchanged a promise ring.
‘ They were betrothed when Rubezahl began
‘ His importunities : but not a thing
‘ Could Michael call his own, except a can,
‘ A net, a boat, a cot. He was, in short,
‘ A fisherman. Yon lake was his resort ;

XX.

' You still can see it, far away down there.
' And Marietta's mother was a woman
' Who for her offspring had a proper care.
' That pretty child of hers should marry no man,
' This worthy woman's wont was to declare,
' Who had not ('twas before such things were com-
mon)
' First built a big hotel at Chamouni,
' Where, as you know, are now no less than three.

XXI.

' Poor Michael seemed to Marietta's mother
' A son-in-law not to be thought of. So
' The two young people could not meet each other
' Except by stealth, which they contrived to do
' Once every week at Mass. But what a bother
' The maiden found it, you may guess, to know
' That if she ventured out of doors to stir,
' This love-sick Imp was sure to follow her.

XXII.

' Of course she knew not who or what he was,
' Except that he was not the man she sought.
' One day, however, coming from the Mass,
' She managed to tell Michael what she thought
' That he should know when things to such a pass
' As this were come, and ask him what she ought
' To do. She said, with much solicitude,
' That she by a rich burgher was pursued ;

XXIII.

'The burgher, too, had promised her, if she
 'Would but consent to marry him, Heaven knows
 what !
 'And he had said that from her mother he
 'Her hand would long ago have sought, but that
 '(Although he was as rich as rich could be,
 'Richer in fact than even Baron Nat,
 'Or the Schultheiss of Berne) for reasons hidden,
 'This natural step was to his love forbidden ;

XXIV.

'Unless, indeed, the girl would first of all
 'Pledge him her troth, either without condition,
 'Or else, at least, in terms conditional
 'On his accomplishment of some commission
 'From her received. And he assured her, all
 'Her heart could wish a man of his position
 'Could easily perform. Such wealth as his
 'Surmounted even impossibilities !

XXV.

'Now, Michael was a sensible young man,
 'Who never in his life had any doubt
 'As to the way in which his interests ran ;
 'One of those men who know what they're about,
 'In fact, a Swiss ! He had made up his plan
 'In less time than it takes me to point out
 'This merit in his character, and so
 'He told the girl at once what she must do.

XXVI.

“ ‘Tis clear to me, my pretty one,” he said,
“ The eccentric personage whom you suppose
“ To be a rich old burgher, over head
“ And ears in love, as his proposal shows,
“ Is the famed Rubezahl.” A cry of dread
‘ Escaped poor Marietta’s lips at those
‘ Alarming words. But, admirably cool,
‘ Michael went on “ Don’t be a little fool !

XXVII.

“ He cannot eat you, and his wealth may aid
“ Both of us if my counsel you pursue
“ Adroitly. Listen ! All the old Gnome said
“ About your mother, and so forth, is true :
“ His boast that no condition can be laid
“ Upon him that’s beyond his power to do
“ What he is asked to do, was nothing more,
“ You may be sure, than a big—metaphor !

XXVIII.

“ Some things would puzzle wiser heads than his,
“ And baffle stronger hands ! Leave that to me.
“ Repulse no more his assiduities ;
“ Encourage them discreetly. And, if he
“ Offers you little presents, why there is
“ No harm in taking them. They’re sure to be
“ Useful some day. What else you have to do,
“ After next Mass I will explain to you.”

XXIX.

‘ Now, you must know that when all this took place
 ‘ ’Twas in the time of year when overnight
 ‘ The frost begins to form, and one may trace
 ‘ Next morning, hanging to the fir-cones, bright
 ‘ Fine needles of thin ice. The open space
 ‘ Where we just now are sitting was then quite
 ‘ Shut in towards the west by a huge wall
 ‘ Of rock. Yon lake enclasped its pedestal.

XXX.

‘ And Master Michael, with a secret sigh,
 ‘ The enormous mass of this immovable shelf
 ‘ Of grassless granite had been wont to eye,
 ‘ Musing and muttering to his own wise self,
 ‘ “ Saints ! what a sorry joke it is that I
 ‘ “ Most probably a hoard of precious pelf
 ‘ “ Have here at hand, and cannot get it out ! ”
 ‘ There was good cause for this complaint, no doubt ;

XXXI.

‘ For Michael had sharp eyes as well as brains ;
 ‘ His cabin, near the lake, was built hard by
 ‘ That rock’s broad base ; and certain sparkling grains
 ‘ Strewn in its chipped quartz he had chanced to
 spy,
 ‘ Yellow and fine as flower-dust. With great pains
 ‘ First having scraped together patiently
 ‘ Some handfuls of this dust, he washed it well.
 ‘ It looked like gold. But more he could not tell.

XXXII.

'The youngster's first step was, I need not say,
'To keep his secret to himself ; his next
'To reach Geneva, walking all the way ;
'And there, quite confident and unperplexed,
'He strolled into a goldsmith's shop one day
'Saying (of course 'twas only a pretext)
"Pray can you make me, Sir, a wedding ring
"Out of this gold ? I want one for next Spring."

XXXIII.

'The goldsmith took the packet, looked at it,
'And said, "'Twould be a troublesome affair
'To make a ring of this. But wait a bit !
'"Choose out a ring from any you see there,
'"And you shall have your gold's worth, every whit,
'"(When I have weighed it) in that ring, whate'er
'"Its weight may be. Moreover, for the sake
'"Of the gold's fineness, I'll not charge for make."

XXXIV.

'Michael the bargain took. His ways he went
'With joy repressed, and projects numberless
'For finding out some sort of instrument
'Which might enable him to dispossess
'The auriferous quartz of all that treasure pent
'Within its veins. But Michael, being a Swiss
'Was Swiss enough to know that, if they knew it,
'Some other Swiss would covetously do it ;

XXXV.

' So he said nothing. And I wish to say
 ' For my part, here, that I do not believe
 ' That they would have believed him. Any way,
 ' Devil a grain of gold (and much I grieve
 ' That what I say is true) since Michael's day,
 ' Though you might search these hills from morn
 to eve,
 ' Would you or any one of us discover !
 ' But to return to Marietta's lover ;

XXXVI.

' I mean her Goblin Lover, Rubezahl.
 ' By Michael carefully instructed, she
 ' Accorded to the Kobold many a small
 ' Encouragement. To do him justice, he
 ' Did not abuse those favours. After all,
 ' He was a gnome ; and therefore it may be,
 ' Too much in love not to act by her well.
 ' Since he was not a man, that's possible.

XXXVII.

' Their meetings, tho' more frequent now, remained
 ' Quite innocent. Her mother would be sure
 ' To scold her, Marietta had maintained,
 ' Were she to lose her time ; so, to procure
 ' Excuses for these meetings, she now feigned
 ' That, if such intercourse was to endure,
 ' She needs must bring her work with her, and ply
 ' Her needle nimbly in his company.

XXXVIII.

' One day, the two were sitting where we sit :
' And, as I said before, 'twas just the time
' When every fir-cone has attached to it
' By the conjunction of the morning rime
' And morning sun, a little sparkling bit
' Of slender ice that, when the matin prime
' Is over, falls in drops, dissolving soon
' Like a wept tear into the warmth of noon.

XXXIX.

' Well, Marietta, when the Gnome was not
' Observing her, stripped off from a fir-cone,
' And slyly hid within her little hot
' Close-crumpled hand, the finest-pointed one
' Of its ice-bodkins; then, when she had got
' (By softly squeezing it till this was done)
' The icicle still finer, she whipped out
' Her needle from the work she was about,

XL.

' Stuck it into her bodice, and went on
' Pretending to be stitching busily
' With its deceptive substitute. Anon
' She started up, and with a sudden cry
' Let fall the icicle which in the sun
' Flashed as it fell; and, stooping, with a sly
' Tap of her foot she crushed it bit by bit,
' While all the while she feigned to look for it.

XLI.

‘Rubezahl, like a gallant gnome, made haste
‘To aid her search ; but, since he was ill-made
‘And awkward, the false needle went to waste
‘And vanished while, upon all fours, with head
‘Down-bent he groped, and rummaged, and embraced
‘The unrequiting ground. As fiercer sped
‘His fruitless quest, the maiden’s feigned distress
‘Increased apace. She wept ; she shook her dress ;

XLII.

‘She wrung her hands ; and “Oh,” she cried, “to this
‘“What will my mother say ?” Then Rubezahl
‘Laughing replied, “Your mother will not miss
‘“One little needle, and the loss were small
‘“Even if she knew it ! But, dear child, dismiss
‘“These vain alarms which have no cause at all ;
‘“To-morrow you shall have, I promise you,
‘“A hundred thousand scores of needles new.”

XLIII.

‘“Alas,” said Marietta, “that would not
‘“Aid me the least ! This needle, you must know,
‘“Is charmed. It is a talisman,—hath got
‘“A secret mark—my mother told me so.
‘“She prizes it immensely, for ’tis what
‘“She stitched her wedding gown with, years ago,
‘“When she was young. She thinks her happiness
‘“Depends upon it. Judge then, my distress !

XLIV.

“O, I shall never dare to own 'tis lost !
“If any one could get it back for me,
“I'd give him willingly the best and most
“I have to give, whatever that may be !”
'At this, the Gnome his shaggy forehead tossed
'With a great cry of joy. “Thou hast,” said he,
“Named the condition !” Then he softly sighed,
“Mine, mine at last ! mine own affianced bride !

XLV.

“Ah, Marietta, how I love thee, dear !”
'The little traitress drooped her pretty eyes ;
'You may be sure 'twas not to hide a tear,
'But a malicious gleam of sweet surprise
'At the success of her own insincere
'Devices, “Well,” she faltered, with feigned sighs,
“That was a foolish word ! but since 'tis said
“I'll keep it true, as I'm an honest maid ;

XLVI.

“Only,” she added, “you must swear to me
“By all that's sacred, you will not betray
“A poor girl's confidence ; and it must be
“The self-same needle I have lost to-day
“You bring me back.” “That's understood,” said he.
'Then Rubezahl, in words I cannot say,
'Pronounced the dreadful oath that binds a gnome,
'And his false bride exultingly tripped home.

XLVII.

'Forthwith the Goblin, sure of his success,
 'Blew through his fingers, and you might have
 marked
 ' (But for the black and roaring dreadfulness
 'Of the tumultuous tempest that now barked
 'And bellowed as if Hell's whole strain and stress,
 'With all the Devil's own artillery parked
 'On yonder peaks, were storming Heaven's last
 height)
 'You might, I say, have marked a wondrous sight :

XLVIII.

'From all the fissures of the rock uprose
 'A multitude of little hairy Elves,
 'Looking like brown old bramble-bushes whose
 'Misshapen roots, as they detached themselves
 'From the loosed soil, turned into ugly toes,
 'That ran and raced about by tens and twelves ;
 'Swarms of them, galloping and prancing all
 'Head over heels now, to their monarch's call ;

XLIX.

"Hearken ! all ye," the Gnome King cried, "that
 scent
 "The slightest savour of the smallest grain
 "Of metal, whose congenial element
 "Lurks hidden in the hard rock's inmost vein,
 "Or wandering strays about earth's surface, blent
 " With baser matter ! Search with might and main !
 "Nose all this soil, and say if here there be
 "One particle of iron hid from me !"

L.

' And the Dwarves answered, " There is gold, gold,
gold !
" " And there is silver, silver, silver, here !
" " And there is zinc, zinc, zinc, too ! and behold,
" " There's also copper, copper, copper, near !
" " And lead, lead, lead ! and rich and manifold
" " The metals be, whose scents our noses cheer
" " With goodly savours all about this spot,
" " But iron, iron, iron, there is not ! "

LI.

" " I bade you not to gibber and to squeak,"
' The Gnome King said, " for minerals of the mine !
" " 'Tis only a steel needle that I seek,
" " The thing that women use and lose, in fine,
" " Day after day. Search yet again ! " A bleak
' Frost-bitten-looking little manikin
' Out of the troop hopped briskly, and unslung
' A magnet from his belt, to which it hung :

LII.

' And thrice he waved it round about his head ;
' And, as he waved it, fast there swarmed to it
' (Just as about some little bit of dead
' Carrion, all sorts of flies and insects flit,
' And settle down there, buzzing to be fed,
' Each drawn by instinct to its nurture fit)
' From up and down, here, there, and round it all,
' A multitude of atoms great and small !

LIII.

“Bring it to me! make haste!” said the Gnome King
 ‘Impatiently. The Dwarf his magnet brought.
 ‘Its clustered trophies, nails, tacks, everything
 ‘Upon it, long he searched for what he sought,
 ‘And found it not. Time’s heedless scattering
 ‘Of iron refuse by Oblivion caught
 ‘From horseshoe, bootnail, ferrule, crowbar, gun,
 ‘Was there in heaps; but needle was there none.

LIV.

‘Then Rubezahl grew serious, and his face
 ‘Darkened, and long he mused. “At least, I know,”
 ‘He muttered, “here it fell, in any case!
 ‘“I saw it fall not half an hour ago.
 ‘“It must have been transported from the place
 ‘“Where then she dropped it, by that storm you so
 ‘“Unnecessarily let loose just now,
 ‘“Or sunk into some crevice deep below;

LV.

‘“Some crevice deeper than the magnet’s spell!
 ‘“Stay here till dawn, I bid you, all of you,
 ‘“And clear this plateau! clear it clean and well
 ‘“Of every blade of grass and moss! Beshrew
 ‘“Your eyes and noses if you fail! Each cell
 ‘“And crevice search! To-morrow, ere the dew
 ‘“Is off the pine, within the Crystal Grot
 ‘“Meet me. And tremble if ye bring it not!”

LVI.

' At that dread order all the pygmy crowd
' Bowed their brown heads. The King of Gnomes
went forth,
' And, frowning, plunged into a thunder-cloud
' Which then was speeding darkly to the north.
' And, Sir, you may imagine what a loud
' Shout of surprise next morning (which was both
' A Sunday and a sunny day) there was,
' When here the folk came flocking by from Mass,

LVII.

' For bare was the whole place of leaf or blade,
' As bald, tho' not as smooth, as a monk's crown !
' Rummaged, raked, scraped, and scratched, and
ferreted,
' And fumbled, jumbled, tumbled up and down !
' The witches had been dancing here, some said,
' The night after the storm. Each had his own
' Peculiar theory ; but every one
' Looked scared, and signed himself, as he passed on.

LVIII.

' Meanwhile, when in the Grotto Rubezahl
' His subjects met, his wrath was terrible
' To learn that the lost needle after all
' Had not been found. With a demoniac yell,
' " Splitflint ! " he called ; and forth there came a small
' Stout Gnome whose muscles made his lumped
limbs swell
' Like serpents with gorged pouch and sated fang.
' " Splitflint, I name thee head of this night's gang !

LIX.

“Select, and with thee take, three hundred stout
“Stone-Scrubbers and Sand-Sifters! From thy
flock
“The strongest and the skilfullest pick out;
“Scrape foot-deep the whole surface of the rock
“That rears its western battlement about
“The plateau where, contriving thus to mock
“Our search, that needle still lurks underground,
“And woe betide thee if it be not found!”

LX.

‘And the poor Gnome King, gnawing his own nails,
‘Went home, and flung himself upon a bed
‘Of amethyst. He groaned, “If Splitflint fails,
“In sight of all his gang he shall be led
“To execution! Till my power prevails
“On that cursed needle, I may never wed
“The maid I love, nor meet her without shame!”
‘But the next morning things were just the same:

LXI.

‘Foot-deep yon rock the obedient Gnomes had filed,
‘Sifted the dust of it, and on the top
‘Of its great granite rampart neatly piled
‘The powdery heaps; which soon began to drop,
‘Blown by the breath of morning breezes mild,
‘Down to the lake, where Michael gathered up
‘The golden first-fruits of his crafty plot.
‘But, as for the lost needle—it was not!

LXII.

' Michael in sacks conveyed his spoil away,
' And hid it. He those sacks had long prepared
' In expectation of this wished-for day.
' The neighbors' curiosity he feared,
' But quite superfluous was that fear ; for they
' By the rock's crumbling aspect were so scared
' That they kept clear of it ; and he, no doubt,
' Scores of alarming rumours spread about.

LXIII.

' As for the Gnome King, when he learned how vain
' Had been the labour of the night, he flew
' Upon poor Splitflint, whom with might and main
' By neck and crop deep down the Grot he drew
' To where a crystal, clear without a stain,
' Of giant size, had just put forth six new
' Unfinished facets, each with sloping lid
' Folded about its nascent pyramid :

LXIV.

' Then, summoning to his relentless rage
' Six Crystal-Builders from earth's nether womb,
' He bade them forthwith to its final stage
' Complete that crystal, and therein entomb
' (A lifelong prisoner in a glassy cage
' Impregnable !) the luckless Splitflint ; whom
' He left there as a warning to the rest,
' Laughing " When precept fails, example's best !

LXV.

‘“ Ho, you there! All of you, behold! and heed!
 ‘“ Rubies and garnets, I’ve enough in store
 ‘“ To cage the whole of you, till you succeed
 ‘“ In finding that lost needle!” And once more
 ‘ He chose another Gnome, and bade him speed
 ‘ The search that night. And when the search
 was o’er
 ‘ The needle still was missing, and the Gnome
 ‘ Caged in a topaz with a blazing dome.

LXVI.

‘ In frustrate search the winter passed. Each day
 ‘ Others, in turn, the same fate underwent;
 ‘ And bit by bit the rock was scraped away
 ‘ Till its shrunk mass began to represent
 ‘ The image of a needle. Need I say
 ‘ Its aspect struck you so just now, you spent
 ‘ Ten minutes watching it? You know its name
 ‘ Is Marietta’s Needle. So, Spring came.

LXVII.

‘ It was the month of May, and early morn,
 ‘ When Rubezahl, whose subjects, one by one
 ‘ All crystallized, had left him now forlorn,
 ‘ (And who himself had, since, his utmost done
 ‘ To find the gift he had so rashly sworn
 ‘ To give to Marietta) stood alone
 ‘ Upon that rock’s last remnant, pondering
 ‘ Vast plans to compass such a little thing!

LXVIII.

' His face was sombre, and his arms were crossed
 ' Athwart his chest. As thus stood Rubezahl,
 ' Like Bonaparte at St. Helena, lost
 ' In thought, he mused—" I saw the needle fall.
 "' Here must it be, and here whate'er the cost
 "' Must it be found! No doubt some magical
 "' Malignant influence, hostile to mine own,
 "' Hath given it power to pierce the impervious
 stone,

LXIX.

"' And burrow in the bowels of the world;
 "' But it shall render up itself I swear,
 "' Tho' o'er its flinty hiding-place were hurled
 "' Andes on Alps, or I, to reach its lair
 "' Must ransack Hell! Ay, even tho' round it furled
 "' The red-ribbed pinions of Apollyon were!
 "' To-night this rock's last pile shall disappear,
 "' Or yield its prize! The needle must be here.

LXX.

"' One trial more, the last! and mine shall be,
 "' To-morrow, both the bride-gift and the bride!
 "' To-morrow,—patience! hope!" Here suddenly
 ' The Goblin's eyes dilated wild and wide.
 ' All up the valley floated sounds of glee;
 ' From the church steeple under the hill side
 ' A peal of merry bells was chiming loud;
 ' And from the church came forth a merry crowd.

LXXI.

' It was a bridal company. They passed
' Out of the church, along the vale, with cries
' Of joyous salutation, as they cast
' White blossoms, that are born when April dies,
' Before the bride and bridegroom, who were last
' To leave the porch. And well the Goblin's eyes
' Might glare! For Marietta was the bride,
' Michael the bridegroom pacing at her side.

LXXII.

' He saw them both. He recognized them well.
' He heard the happy chant that seemed to strive
' For mastery with the chiming marriage bell,
' Of "Long live Marietta!" and "Long live
' "Michael!" Within him surged the thunder-swell
' Of storms more terrible than those that rive
' And rend these Alps. There, went the maid he loved,
' She for whose sake the mountains he had moved!

LXXIII.

' Then from the heart of Rubezahl forth went
' One of those awful cries which pierce their way
' Beyond the limits that suffice to vent
' All other sounds. For 'tis such cries, they say,
' That, by our sombre planet wildly blent
' With the wide music of the spheres, betray
' Earth as the place of wrongs without redress,
' And happinesses that are merciless.

LXXIV.

' Stopped by that cry, the merry-makers all
' Stood speechless. Every voice of them was still.
' The faces of the crowd, as to a call
' From Fate, were turned in answer to its shrill
' Tremendous summons. On the ethereal
' And fatal peak of that rock-needle, chill
' With horror they beheld what seemed to be
' A man ; a human figure certainly ;

LXXV.

' And the man's arms were raised, as if to seize
' In the void air's invisible emptiness
' Something—some gift of those dread Destinies
' Whose task is to avenge and to redress.
' But the Void's gifts, life never gets ; for these
' Are deaths, effacements, disappearances ;
' And, disappearing too, from that grim height
' The man himself plunged headlong out of sight.

LXXVI.

' Slow, as the vision vanished, there arose
' From all the hollows of the hills beneath,
' Wild murmuring melancholy sounds, like those
' Which Autumn makes when the faint scent of death
' Hovers along the woodlands where he goes :
' They were the farewells of the Gnomes, whose faith
' In human love, by human love betrayed,
' Was dead. Forever and forever dead !

LXXVII.

' From every mountain cave and forest glen,
 ' And o'er the misty cataracts whence it went
 ' To carry its reproachful moan to men,
 ' The elfin music of that wild lament,
 ' Now piercing shrill, now falling faint again,
 ' This wail repeated o'er and o'er, to vent
 ' A thousand bitter memories, "*O how high*
 ' "*Is heaven, and O how deep is perfidy!*"

LXXVIII.

' Vain was the search the Village Syndicate
 ' Commanded! Over all the region round
 ' The snow was rummaged; but of that man's fate
 ' Not the least indication could be found.
 ' Of all who saw the vision I relate,
 ' It was, however, the belief profound
 ' That they no visionary form had spied,
 ' But a real man—some desperate suicide!

LXXIX.

' This was at first, I say, the common faith;
 ' But afterwards, when they discovered near
 ' That Needle Rock, some fifty yards beneath,
 ' The mangled body of a traveller,
 ' Who by an avalanche was crushed to death,
 ' Just as profoundly then convinced they were
 ' That the dread spectacle they all had seen
 ' A warning apparition must have been;

LXXX.

' One of those apparitions that precede
 ' Some real catastrophe. And, strange to say,
 ' (Only that superstitions always breed
 ' Such visions) still do folks assert that they
 ' On subsequent occasions have indeed
 ' Again beheld the phantom. That, you may
 ' Believe, or not. I don't. But *this* I do,
 ' For I myself have always found it so :

LXXXI.

' Whenever anyone about this place
 ' Asserts that he himself has really seen
 ' A human figure with a human face
 ' Standing where human figure ne'er hath been
 ' Save once (and that was but a hearsay case)
 ' On Marietta's Needle, (of course I mean
 ' The rock we call so now) as sure as fate,
 ' Some accident has happened, soon or late.'

LXXXII.

' That's not incredible,' said Glenaveril,
 ' Accidents, soon or late, my worthy friend,
 ' With or without such visions, always will
 ' Happen in dangerous haunts, I apprehend.'
 ' Ay,' said the Guide, ' no doubt of it. But still,
 ' The accidents that image doth portend
 ' Invariably happen near this spot.
 ' But to my tale, if it fatigues you not ;

LXXXIII.

' No need to say that Michael had so well
 ' His potent rival's frenzy utilized,
 ' That the construction of a fine hotel
 ' (A proof, by his bride's mother highly prized,
 ' Of his devotion!) was a *bagatelle*
 ' To the young *millionnaire*. He had devised
 ' A clever tale of legacies received,
 ' Which, naturally, nobody believed ;

LXXXIV.

' But everyone believed that Michael had
 ' His wits about him. So that, by and by,
 ' All came to the conclusion that the lad
 ' Owed to those wits his whole prosperity.
 ' They deemed that source of it by no means bad,
 ' And liked him all the better. None knew why
 ' Or how his sudden fortune he had got ;
 ' During his lifetime he revealed it not.

LXXXV.

' After his death the secret all came out ;
 ' And 'twas, indeed, his death that proved to be
 ' The very means of bringing this about.'
 ' But Marietta ?' said Glenaveril, ' she
 ' Was in her husband's confidence ?' ' No doubt !'
 ' And in those early days,' again said he,
 ' Could women keep a secret ?' ' Wait a bit,'
 The Guide said, ' till you hear the end of it.

LXXXVI.

' Poor Marietta was no longer, Sir,
' In a condition to reveal, alas,
' No matter what. The curse had fall'n on her,
' And she the first of the Gnome's victims was.
' Since that event (or else, if you prefer,
' That vision) which, in common with a mass
' Of sane spectators, on her bridal day
' She too had seen, her head was touched, they say.

LXXXVII.

' To her new home, the famous fine hotel
' By Michael built (he guessed not at what cost !)
' Michael's young wife was borne insensible,
' And on the way to it her wits were lost.
' But one idea had been spared to dwell
' Sole tenant of that ruin. Like a ghost
' Unlaid, it came and went, and came again,
' Haunting the empty chambers of the brain :

LXXXVIII.

' That one idea was, that in the snow
' She had lost a precious needle, and was bound
' To go and look for it, since doomed to know
' No peace till this lost needle had been found.
' Her husband, when convinced that it was now
' Past praying for her reason to come round,
' Put no restraint upon its harmless craze.
' He let her have her will, and go her ways ;

LXXXIX.

' Only at first, for fear of accident
 ' He had her watched and followed, wheresoe'er
 ' The poor young fool, to find her needle, went
 ' Wandering among the mountains. But this care
 ' Superfluous proved. She was not violent ;
 ' And, like sleep-walkers, she went safely where
 ' Even those who keep their wits might fear to fall.
 ' Her wanderings, moreover, were but small ;

XC.

' Never beyond the Needle Rock they passed
 ' And to it always tended. She came home
 ' Invariably ere nighfall, running fast
 ' As home she ran that day she duped the Gnome.
 ' And when they found she took no harm, at last,
 ' Go where she would, unwatched they let her
 roam.
 ' Spring, Summer, Autumn, in this way went by,
 ' Bringing no change to her calamity.

XCI.

' Everyone pitied her, and let her pass
 ' Unhindered if she crossed them on their way.
 " 'Tis Marietta, looking in the grass
 " "For her lost needle!" would the children say
 ' When they beheld her, as her wont it was,
 ' Searching the grass and moss day after day,
 ' And, as she searched them, murmuring "O how high
 " "Is heaven, and O how deep is perfidy!"

XCII.

' One January morning, when all night
 ' The weather had been freezing hard, they found
 ' Her sleeping-chamber (a ground floor one) quite
 ' Deserted, and the casement near the ground
 ' Set open wide ; a candle, still alight,
 ' But choking in its socket, made a sound
 ' As hoarse as a death-rattle where the wick
 ' Gasp'd suffocated in the candlestick ;

XCIII.

' An open letter on the table lay
 ' Unfinished ; 'twas in Marietta's hand.
 " Michael," the letter said, " I cannot stay !
 " " He came just now beneath my window, and
 " Tapped at the casement, calling, *Come away !*
 " "*The moon is light, the snow is bright, the land*
 " *Is clear and still, and I will help thee now*
 " "*To find thy needle, for its place I know.*

XCIV.

" " It is the cold down there makes dead men ache,
 " " He told me, and no winding-sheet hath he.
 " " And so I promised him for pity's sake,
 " " That, when the needle's found, as found 'twill be,
 " " A winding sheet to warm him I will make.
 " " 'Twill soon be done, for he depends on me,
 " " And I must finish it for him, poor man,
 " " (I promised that) as quickly as I can.

XCV.

‘“ He has been dead so long, and that is why
 ‘“ He is so cold, so cold ! Beneath the breast
 ‘“ Of the black earth, he says, where dead men lie,
 ‘“ There is no warmth. I wonder how he guessed
 ‘“ Where we shall find our needle ! *O how high*
 ‘“ *Is heaven, and—*How does it go on, the rest ?
 ‘“ I have forgotten. He will be offended.
 ‘“ That vexes me.” And so the letter ended.

XCVI.

‘ The whole of Chamouni was soon astir
 ‘ In search of her, for all had loved her well.
 ‘ Despite the hardness of his character,
 ‘ Michael retained an indescribable
 ‘ Sort of remorseful tenderness for her
 ‘ Who was the accomplice, and, as it befell,
 ‘ The victim, of his well-planned stratagem.
 ‘ Fast he pressed forward at the head of them.

XCVII.

‘ Instinctively the steps of all were bent
 ‘ Towards the rock which was already known
 ‘ As Marietta’s Needle, since she went
 ‘ Daily to visit it ; but not alone
 ‘ On that account, for it was evident
 ‘ To all, that by degrees this rock had grown
 ‘ Into the semblance of a needle. You,
 ‘ That strange similitude have noticed too ;

XCVIII.

‘ The point of it, as you perceived just now,
‘ Is planted downwards ; and against the sky
‘ The head, to which the long shaft broadens slow,
‘ Reveals, exactly like a needle’s eye,
‘ An oblong fissure. Well, Sir, you must know
‘ Michael was first, in his anxiety,
‘ To reach the plateau, where transfixed with awe
‘ The others found him. This is what they saw :

XCIX.

‘ Beneath a frozen pine from whose down-weighed
‘ Black boughs the slipping snow-dust fell fine
sifted,
‘ Sat Marietta. On her lap was laid
‘ A linen sheet ; and in one hand uplifted
‘ She held an icicle. And there she stayed
‘ Motionless, tho’ the climbing snows had drifted
‘ Up to her knees. For she was frozen dead.
‘ All held their breath, and not a word was said,

C.

‘ So stupefied was each spectator there !
‘ But a fresh horror seized on everyone,
‘ When, with a scream of agonized despair,
‘ Michael now suddenly began to run
‘ Tumultuously here, there, everywhere
‘ About the plateau, as if chasing one,
‘ To seize whose image, seen by none beside,
‘ The wretched man still desperately tried ;

CI.

‘ And all the while he shouted out, “ Come back !
 ‘ “ Come back ! Turn, Marietta, turn ! ’Tis I,
 ‘ “ Thy husband—Michael ! Hear me, girl ! Alack,
 ‘ “ Will no one help to stop her ? Not so nigh
 ‘ “ The edge, child ! François, keep her off that track !
 ‘ “ Pierre ! Louis ! André ! Jacques ! for Heaven’s
 sake try
 ‘ “ To hold her ! Ah, the cowards ! Look at her !
 ‘ “ So close—and all of you afraid to stir ! ”

CII.

‘ Then while, immovable as all could see,
 ‘ Frozen beneath the frozen pine, still sat
 ‘ The white dead woman whose false phantom he
 ‘ Was thus importunately clutching at,
 ‘ The maniac, with a frantic spring, shook free
 ‘ The frightened friends that, scarcely knowing
 what
 ‘ They feared, vain arms around him strove to lock,
 ‘ And, bounding, clambered up the Needle Rock !

CIII.

‘ From where it strikes the plateau, near this spot,
 ‘ (You may have noticed, as we came along)
 ‘ That rock seems easy of ascent, and not
 ‘ So desperately steep but that a strong
 ‘ And active man, if he good wind had got,
 ‘ And a cool head, might, without going wrong,
 ‘ The summit reach. Yet all the world’s aware
 ‘ No man could keep his head a moment there.

CIV.

' Michael, indeed, as by a miracle,
' *Did* reach the summit ; reached it safe and sound !
' But he no sooner reached it, than the spell
' Seemed broken, and his wits again he found,
' Only to lose them in the horrible
' Sense of his danger. Piteously around
' The poor wretch stared in terror-struck surprise,
' Then, shuddering all over, shut his eyes.

CV.

' And those who, impotent to save or aid,
' Watched from below, in that short interval
' Of anguish, saw him lift a hand that strayed
' Feeling about like a blind man's. Then all
' His body totteringly soughed and swayed,
' His arms with flapping jerk fantastical
' Beat, like a bird's wings, the impalpable air ;
' And in a minute more the rock was bare.

CVI.

' From crag to crag the body like a stone
' Went bounding to the frozen lake below.
' For that crevasse is quite a recent one,
' You noticed, as we came along just now,
' Under the Needle Rock. Where it hath grown
' The waters of the lake used once to flow.
' So to the cabin where his life began
' His death restored Michael the fisherman !

CVII.

' Hid in that cabin, there were found at last
 ' Huge heaps of gold-dust. Michael had no heirs ;
 ' So all this treasure to the Commune passed,
 ' Who made good use of it when it was theirs.
 ' Upon the wealth by Michael's craft amassed,
 ' And by his death dispersed, this tale declares
 ' That the prosperity of Chamouni
 ' Was founded, But the tale is all a lie ! '

CVIII.

' It is a tale,' said Ivor, as the Guide
 Made this remark, ' that bears undoubtedly
 ' Strong family resemblance to a wide
 ' Group of like tales. Perchance the reason why
 ' Is that to cheat the Devil fills with pride
 ' The People's honest heart. There's something sly
 ' In human nature, which, to be excused,
 ' Gets itself thus legitimately used.

CIX.

' Your Michael was, however, I should say,
 ' A character distinctly national ;
 ' It seems, at least, that he knew how to play
 ' (Turning them to his own advantage all)
 ' On other folks' requirements in a way
 ' That shows he must have had a special call
 ' To keep an inn ; by which means, now and then,
 ' Men *do* make money out of other men.

CX.

'But tell me what of Rubezahl became !
'Had he no more adventures of this kind ?'
'I think not,' said the Guide. 'At least his name
'Nowhere in other love-tales can I find.
'Love-making he had found a losing game,
'And after this experience had no mind,
'It may be, Sir, to play the dupe again ;
'Or else, the Chamouni maidens are too plain.

CXI.

'And Marietta may perhaps have been
'In that particular unlike them all ;
'Anyhow, nothing more has since been seen,
'In this enlightened land, of Rubezahl.
'If, after this, the Hartz became the scene
'Of his adventures, 'tis but natural
'Thence to infer that there the men are blinder,
'It may be, or the women somewhat kinder.

CXII.

'Nevertheless, the notion, as I've said,
'Still lingers here, that Rubezahl (no doubt
'Because 'twas here that he had lost his head,
'Falling in love with Marietta) out
'Of pure revenge and spite is sometimes led
'To take his stand again on yonder height,
'In order to announce the near event
'Of some inevitable accident.

CXIII.

‘As for myself, I need not tell you, Sir,
‘I put no faith in rumours of that sort.
‘Well as I know the goblin character
‘Of Marietta’s Needle by report,
‘There’s nothing in these rumours, I aver
‘From simple observation. For, in short,
‘I know that rock as well as mine own hand,
‘And know that no one on its top could stand.’

CXIV.

As he made this decisive declaration
Of incredulity the Guide arose,
And stood awhile in silent contemplation
Of the horizon, whose ethereal snows,
Rose-colored now with the illumination
Of sunset, shone in a sublime repose.
Glenaveril watched him. Suddenly he saw
The man’s face gleaming with a ghastly awe ;

CXV.

And that strong-minded marcher in the van
Of Popular Enlightenment, was all
Trembling from head to foot. A shudder ran
Thro’ his whole frame ; he seemed about to fall,
But with an effort stayed himself, as, wan
With a wild look of unequivocal
Horror, he stood still pointing in the air,
And gasping, ‘Saints in Heaven, the thing is there !’

CXVI.

Glenaveril started to his feet, and gazed

Where the Guide's hand was pointing. With a cry
Of anguish, he too trembled, awed, amazed.

Darkly distinct against the glowing sky,
Upon the Needle-Rock which there upraised

Its shining pinnacle, immovably
A human figure stood. He knew it well.
That human figure was Emanuel.

CANTO III.

THE CATASTROPHE.

I.

MEANWHILE, the Guide was now recovering
From the first terrors of the false alarm
With which, despite his scorn of everything
That savoured of a superstitious charm,
He had mistaken for the dread Gnome King
(That phantom harbinger of human harm !)
In the dark solitary image there,
The traveller confided to his care.

II.

Freed from this ghastly error, the old man
Was seized forthwith by fears more practical
About the risk his reputation ran
If any harm should to his charge befall ;
And, to relieve his feelings, he began
To pour forth fresh anathemas on all
The English race,—much more concerned about
His patent than Emanuel's fate, no doubt.

III.

‘Confound the fool!’ he grumbled, ‘I declare
‘Tis that insane milord of yours again!
‘How, in the devil’s name, did he get there?
‘Hah, by St. Peter’s legs, the fellow’s brain
‘Must all be just as wrong-side-up as were
‘The Saint’s toes when, lest they should make
 him vain,
‘They crucified him topsy-turvy. Ho!
‘Monsieur Milord, hold fast! Don’t look below!

IV.

‘Was ever such a madman! If he meant
‘To break his neck, he should have staid at home,
‘And not come here with that absurd intent,
‘To mix us all up in his venturesome
‘Vagaries! Zounds! if there’s an accident
‘He’ll compromise the Alps! I wish that some
‘Fine folks would take into consideration
‘That guiding maniacs is not our vocation!

V.

‘All English lords are lunatics! Here, Jean,
‘Get up!’ And angrily he shook awake
His sleeping comrade (who, when he began
 His story-telling, had seen fit to make
A shorter journey, like a prudent man,
 Into the land of dreams) ‘Get up, and take
‘With thee the longest rope that we have got!
‘Look yonder! Haste thee fast, and linger not!

VI.

' The Needle, turn upon the glacier side ;
' To attempt it from the plateau were in vain ;
' Once on the glacier, 'tis an easy stride
' To reach the lower ridge of the moraine.
' Fling him the rope's end up, and bid him bide
' Just where he is, till I am back again.
' I must to François for the ladders run,
' For till we get them nothing can be done.

VII.

' 'Tis lucky that the cabin is so near !
' He never will be able to get down
' By the same way that he got up, that's clear ;
' And there's no way at all, he should have known,
' Upon this side, where the descent is sheer.
' Be careful, comrade, how the rope is thrown ;
' See that the end of it is firmly braced.
' And now, God speed ! We must be off. Make haste !'

VIII.

The Guide's composure, as these plans he made,
Partly assuaged Glenaveril's agitation
On seeing that Emanuel had strayed
Into so perilous a situation,
Where even a chamois might have been afraid
To place its foot. The Needle's elevation,
Moreover, from the plateau, to his sight
Presented no such formidable height ;

IX.

He knew not, or he had not understood,
That from this point, although the height seemed
small,
There was no access possible. The rock, viewed
From where he stood, looked low ; but it was all
So slippery here that its low altitude
Availed not. On the other side, the fall
Was awful. There, between the point and base
Was nothing but illimitable space.

X.

This Needle, the last granite splinter left
Of a huge mountain that by gradual stages
Had slowly crumbled down into the cleft
Of the crevasse beneath the weight of ages,
Forgotten avalanches had bereft
Of all save that wild sadness which engages
Men's pitying superstition to adorn
With Fancy's flowers Time's ravages forlorn.

XI.

Smooth from the plateau to the point, elsewhere
Its broken surface, turned to the abyss,
Uneasy foothold still vouchsafed. And there
That vegetable gnome whose region is
Remote from man's, the mountain juniper,
Crouching deformed, from its interstices
Peeped, or put forth a clambering crooked root
That looked like some brown goblin's grewsome foot.

XII.

Attracted by the aspect, half sublime
And half grotesque, of this grim monument
Set there as its last protest against time
By the resentful Alp, Emanuel bent
His steps towards it. Something seemed to chime
In his own heart harmonious to its rent
Yet resolute form—some sentiment allied
To nature in revolt—a ravaged pride!

XIII.

Raised barely fifty feet above the ledge
Of the broad plateau, to whose level disk
Its summit at right angles turned an edge
Smooth as the surface of an obelisk,
(While down it shot from the moraine's left ridge,
Rough with anfractuosités grotesque,
A shaft that disappeared beyond sight's soundings)
The rock's sole grandeur rose from its surroundings;

XIV.

But well by these, could he but reach its brow,
Would its explorer be repaid, for there
The charmed spectator might aspire to know
What the ger-eagle feels when in mid-air
He wheels above the world. Nothing but snow
And air rose-lighted underneath, save where
Far off the bright green valley gleamed, and gloomed
The dark blue lake in icy vaults entombed!

XV.

Emanuel, gazing up to that lone height,
 Felt, with a mystic ecstasy elate,
 Some foretaste of this coveted delight.

His sombre spirit yearned to extricate
 Itself, for once, completely from the trite
 And yet tenacious bondage of that state
 Which separates man from nature more or less,
 By his continual self-consciousness.

XVI.

'Thought, tethered not to him who thinks! pure
 Thought!

'Thought by itself! O, were it possible
 For human nature to attain to aught
 'So like Divinity!' mused Emanuel.
 'By Action's restless mechanism caught,
 'And forced, as in an engine, to propel
 'Man to man's personal aims—ambition, self,
 'Love, science, safety—Thought is not itself:

XVII.

'But O the rapture! could Thought slip the sense
 'Of Self, that cripples its capacious span,
 'And (freely spreading forth its wings immense,
 'Like that strange Sprite the Arabian fisherman
 'Loosed from the little iron vessel, whence
 'It soared and swelled, colossal) from each plan
 'Or purpose of self-interest liberate
 'Itself, and to infinity dilate!'

XVIII.

This fancy filled his soul with yearnings vast.

For once, the weight, the burden, and the pain,
Of his own vexed identity to cast

Wide to the winds of heaven! to be again
Careless as Nature, conscious of no past,

No present, and no future! to attain
To the supreme Idea, and immerse
The individual in the universe!

XIX.

And, stooping forward, he perceived that, where

The Needle faced the precipice, the stone
Was rough with broad projections here and there;

Half consciously he placed his foot on one;
The ground held firm; and up this natural stair

The clambering juniper long roots had thrown;
Like Theseus grasping Ariadne's clue,
He by their aid his pathway could pursue.

XX.

His first steps were but an experiment,

A half-mistrustful tentative essay.

The experiment succeeded. On he went,

Clutching the rope-like roots. The upward way
Grew easier, and soon the whole ascent

Had been completed. On the summit grey
Of Marietta's Needle safe he stood;
Nothing all round him but the solitude.

XXI.

And what a solitude ! One boundless glance
Embraced the whole horizon. Chastity
And passion ! Snow and sunlight, in a trance
Of solemn glory ! With a deep-drawn sigh
Of rapture, in that rose-hued radiance,
Like an alighted Seraph silently
Contemplating the world, and winged and eyed
From head to foot, he stood beatified.

XXII.

While there he leant upon his alp-staff fast
Fixed in a fissure, as a sentinel
Leans on his spear, and measuring round the vast
Horizon's æry zone, Emanuel
Was to self-consciousness recalled at last
By a shrill shout that sounded like a yell ;
For now the second Guide, with might and main,
Had clambered up the ridge of the moraine.

XXIII.

There, on a pile of splintered stones astride
A coil of rope the man was loosening slow ;
While, shouting, to Emanuel he cried,
To catch the rope he was about to throw,
Fasten it to the summit on the side
Nearest the plateau, and then drop below,
Using the knots in it, as down he went,
With hands and feet, to steady his descent.

XXIV.

In the same moment, with a dismal thrill,
Not far beneath him, he beheld, scarce more
Than twelve or fifteen feet, Glenaveril,
Who, just as he himself had done before,
Had left the plateau, and was standing still
Half up the precipice that beetled o'er
The vast crevasse upon the other side.
Glenaveril had thus outstripped the Guide ;

XXV.

Outstripped the Guide, without a sound ! His face
And lips were whiter than the snows that laid
Their livid silence round that perilous place ;
Emanuel could see that he had made
(And that he now was tightening it apace
About his waist, as if he were afraid
It might not hold) a threefold girdle wrought
Out of a second rope which he had brought ;

XXVI.

He saw Glenaveril, when this was done,
Making the other end of the rope tight
About an old pine stump—the only one
That barren spot vouchsafed ; and this was quite
Splintered and broken short above the stone
Its roots still clasped ; all else of it the might
Of some unconquerable avalanche
Had snapped and whirled asunder, trunk and branch.

XXVII.

Emanuel understood this silent toil—

Glenaveril's face of dumb determination,
The life-belt and the anchor, and the coil,
Were the life-boatman's desperate preparation,
Before he plunges in the surge, to foil
Death's clutch, by keeping some communication
With the firm cliff, from which into the deep
For life or death he is about to leap :

XXVIII.

But here, the anchorage was nothing more
Than an old rotten stump which might give way ;
A dreadful precipice, the sheltering shore ;
The deep, one vast abysm (the light of day
Was leaving fast, and darkness hovering o'er)
Of empty air, now yawning for its prey ;
The life-boat, all that since his life began
His heart best loved ; and he the shipwrecked man !

XXIX.

Up to this moment, on his pinnacle
Of isolated grandeur, all alone
With the lone Infinite, Emanuel
Had had no fear, no thought, about his own
Existence. When he heard the Guide's loud yell,
As the man shouted to him, to make known
The desperate rescue ready for him now,
He turned and, for the first time, looked below.

XXX.

This sudden contrast was too violent ;
The terror by Glenaveril's face betrayed
Was to his own transmitted. While he bent
His gaze on those mute preparations made
For his escape, their revelation sent
A surging rush of blood into his head ;
His limbs felt loosened ; his foot seemed to stand
Infirm ; the alp-staff quivered in his hand.

XXXI.

Not even a gesture's silent intimation,
Still less the utterance of a syllable,
Since the beginning of this situation
Had been exchanged. But Ivor's eye could tell
All that was passing ; and, with consternation
Seeing the changed face of Emanuel,
He braced himself together, setting wide
His legs, like a young wrestler, with firm stride ;

XXXII.

Then to Emanuel in a loud clear tone
Calmly he called, ' Lean not so heavily
' Upon thy staff, but hold it fast. Well done !
' Now shut thine eyes. That's right ! Rest so,
while I
' Count sixty. That will calm thy blood. Anon
' Open them. Not too quickly ! And then try
' To fix them upon Jean. I'll give the word,
' Keep quiet till he throws thee up the cord !

XXXIII.

'Straighten thy knees, then; keeping thy left hand
 'Upon thine alp-staff, and the right hand free.
 'No need to move thy body! Only stand
 'Straight, and keep Jean in view. Don't look at me!
 'When the rope passes catch it quickly, and
 'Holding it fast still in the right hand—see,
 'This way, quite loosely—without letting go,
 'Pass thy right arm about the alp-staff—so!

XXXIV.

'Hast thou completely understood all this?'
 Emanuel, from his pinnacle in the skies,
 In a voice faint and husky answered 'Yes.'
 'Now, art thou ready?' 'Yes.' 'Open thine eyes.
 'Dost thou see Jean, there?' 'No.' 'He is standing
 less
 'Than thirty paces yonder on the rise
 'Of the moraine—there to the left, below
 'The plateau. Now, then, canst thou see him?'
 'No.'

XXXV.

Emanuel's voice was huskier, and less
 Distinct each time. A gesture of despair
 Glenaveril was unable to repress;
 And, for an instant, he stood speechless there,
 Half paralysed by his immense distress.
 The light was waning fast. In that dim air,
 On that lone height, Emanuel's image, too,
 Faint as his voice and indistincter grew.

XXXVI.

After a dismal pause, Glenaveril,
 Still gazing upward, to Emanuel
 Cried in a tone whose accents, tho' more shrill,
 Were yet assured, 'No matter! it is well.
 'Only lift up thy right hand, and stand still!
 'When the rope passes, try if possible
 'To seize it. It is sure to touch thy hand.
 'Jean!' 'Sir!' 'Be ready. Wait for the command.'

XXXVII.

'All right, Sir!' said the Guide. 'Depend on me.'
 'Good! But begin not ere I give the word;
 'And then, as soon as I have counted three,
 '(Three is the signal) you can fling the cord.
 'Be careful that the slip-knot runs quite free,
 'And keep your eyes well fixed upon my lord.
 'Now then, attention! I begin. One—two—
 'Three!—' And away the rope's loosed circle
 flew;

XXXVIII.

Silent and fleet it flew into the air
 Like a long flying serpent filleted
 With knotty studs, and, fast unwinding there
 Its spiral rings in an ellipse, it made
 A sudden downward dip, as if it were
 Evading consciously Emanuel's head,
 Touched his raised hand, that stirred not as it passed
 Uncaught; and, frustrate, fell to earth at last.

XXXIX.

‘The attempt has failed!’ Glenaveril groaned. And then,
‘Fear not, Emanuel! Be calm!’ he cried.
‘We cannot now employ the rope again;
‘But ’tis no matter. Canst thou there abide
‘Five minutes only till we are three men
‘Instead of two? Five minutes! The Old Guide
‘In less time than five minutes will be here
‘With all the ladders. Thou hast nought to fear!’

XL.

And to these agonized enquiries, all
Brokenly came the answer from above
In interjections hoarse and guttural,
‘Glenaveril! the rock begins to move—
‘Beneath my feet ’tis rolling like a ball—
‘And my head splits as if a pickaxe clove
‘Through skull and brain—and both my feet feel
dead—
‘And all things suddenly have turned blood-red!’

XLI.

Then cried Glenaveril, loud as he could cry,
‘Plant fast thy staff upon the Needle’s top!
‘Let thyself slide along it quietly
‘Down to the ledge! The staff thy fall will stop,
‘And thou canst sit there. Or if not,—then try
‘To grasp the ledge—and fear not, friend, but drop!’
Scarce had he spoken, ere from the rock’s shelf
A thunderous cataract detached itself;

XLII.

And down the Needle Rock, loud roaring, crashed
Tumultuously an immense white cloud
Of snow, and dust, and splintered stones. Two smashed
Bits of a broken staff, that whirling shroud
Bore with it : two wild arms that flapped and dashed
The air, like a tossed puppet's : and, thro' a crowd
Of shapeless things that shook its fluttering pall,
A human body in headforemost fall.

XLIII.

For this catastrophe, by him foreseen,
Glenaveril waited, breathless, resolute :
As a skilled player calculates with keen
Precision both the motion and the route
Of a rebounding ball, so he had been
Careful the dreadful coming to compute
Of that dear burden he awaited there,
And with a shout he sprang into the air ;

XLIV.

Sprang swift as a young leopard on its prey,
Into the abyss that girt the precipice !
One impulse only did his limbs obey ;
And that was to hold fast at any price,
And never loose. He spread his arms, and they
Closed as tenacious as an iron vice
Upon the indiscriminate human heap
That thus dashed with him headlong to the deep.

XLV.

So in a wild inextricable embrace

The bodies of the two friends, bound together,
Swung o'er the void abysm of dusky space ;

Suspended only by the quivering tether
Of the strained cord, which jerked and tugged apace
At its half-rotten anchorage. The wide ether
Was deathly dumb, and wan as death the white
Wide snows, and darkening o'er them crept the night.



CANTO IV.

DEATH'S METAMORPHOSES.

I.

LIFE hath exhausted the whole arsenal
Of terror : Life doth decorate and fill
Daily its formidable realm with all
Weapons that wound, and instruments that kill :
Life is a tyrant at whose beck and call
Is every misery, and every ill,
All maladies and all uncertainties,
And but one certainty—the end of these :

II.

And yet Life smiles ! Death for itself retains
But one gift only—silence : Death is rest :
Death is the end of all Life's countless pains :
Death's eyes are shut : Death's mouth is dumb :
Death's breast
Is calm : from those locked lips, like lawless trains
Of bandit troops for plunder armed, with crest
Gay-plumed, no more shall issue forth to strife
The Passions that have devastated Life :

III.

From those shut eyes, to lure and to betray,
No more shall gleam the looks whose very smile
Troubles the heart, and with its subtle play
Awakes a thousand wishes that beguile
Their hesitating victim far away
From his repose : Death breathes no word in guile ;
Death breaks no promise : Death betrays no rightful
Reliance on its pledge. Yet Death is frightful !

IV.

Why is the straw on yonder pavement strown ?
It is that Death to yonder house draws near,
And Death brings silence with it. The loud town
Quickens its pace along that street : to hear
No echo of a footfall up or down
Its muffled stones dismays the gossips. Drear
And lightless look those shuttered windows, where
No face is seen. For Death has entered there.

V.

Within that chamber, under its dim shade
The lamp burns low. No sound can pass that door ;
And the thick carpet silences the tread
That steals a tiptoe o'er the noiseless floor ;
A man the chamber quits with bended head ;
One waits without, whose hand he shakes with more
Than wonted warmth ; and not a word is spoken ;
But each hath understood the silent token.

VI.

The man that went will come again no more ;
His task is done, he hath nought left to do ;
But something else, that was not there before,
Hath entered ; something awful, something new ;
None saw it pass, none oped to it the door,
It makes no sound ; or, if a sound, but few
That sound have heard, from the close-curtained bed.
Only a sigh. A sigh, and all is said !

VII.

Wherefore those sobs, those moans, those stifled cries,
Those overflowing tears that fall so fast?
Why have yon man and woman, as they rise,
Their arms about each other wildly cast,
Gazing on that white face with weeping eyes ?
It is because this sigh hath been the last,
Because the faint and half inaudible breath
That wafted it away from them was Death.

VIII.

But when Death passes in the street, it goes
More loudly, goes with clamour and with crowd,
With comment and confusion. Barely those
Six stalwart men, whose heads and backs are bowed
Beneath the litter where in state repose
Death's trophies, can make way between the loud
Inquisitive groups, at each street-corner growing
Thicker, along the road that they are going :

IX.

From mouth to mouth a rumour flies about ;
 Like sparks in scattered tinder dancing over
 Some street wherein the folks have just put out
 A burning house, quick questions kindle and hover,
 And cross and mix in a disorderly rout :
 'When did they first the accident discover?'—
 'How many dead?'—'Two.'—'No, I heard it said
 'That only one of them was found stone dead ;

X.

'The other's breathing yet.'—'But he'll die too,
 'He cannot live!'—'How happened this event?'—
 'They say it was a suicide.'—'Pooh, pooh !
 'I tell thee, neighbour, 'twas an accident'—
 'No, 'twas an Englishman.'—'That's always so!'—
 'Who was the little German, then, that went
 'All risks to save him?'—'I don't know.'—'They say
 'It was his lordship's German tutor.'—'Nay,

XI.

'Only a servant.'—'No, indeed, I hear
 'It was his secretary.'—'That's the same.'—
 'I doubt it! No one but a friend would care
 'To risk his life so.'—'What was the man's name?'—
 'I never heard.'—'He's dead, tho', I declare.'—
 'No, 'tis the Englishman that's dead.'—'Tis shame
 'And pity that a man so young and rich
 'Should go and lose his life at toss and pitch!'—

XII.

‘ Ah, that’s their way ! ’—‘ I’ve heard the two men fell
‘ Together headlong into a crevasse,
‘ Three hundred metres down.’—‘ That’s possible.’—
‘ No, no ! the bodies near the great Jorasse
‘ Were found not far from François’ cabin.’—‘ Well,
‘ I know, at least, whichever way it was,
‘ (For this the guide assured me, so ’tis true)
‘ ’Twas no light job to separate the two !

XIII.

‘ The man who tried to save the other one
‘ Gripped him so fast, they were obliged to break
‘ His arm, to get the second man undone ;
‘ And I am told they had some work to take
‘ His teeth out of the dead man’s coat. There’s none,
‘ (Say, neighbours, what you will !) shall ever make
‘ My mind convinced that those two men were not
‘ Sworn foes ! Some deadly quarrel they had got ;

XIV.

‘ ’Twas an American duel. You’ll find out
‘ That there has been a woman in the case.’—
‘ But, neighbour, where did all this come about ? ’—
‘ At the Croix Rouge.’—‘ No, no, I know the place,
‘ ’Twas Marietta’s Needle.’—‘ Ah, no doubt,
‘ That fatal rock ! It always brings disgrace !
‘ There’ll be some dreadful accident.’—‘ If these
‘ Are not enough, friend, thou art hard to please ! ’

XV.

So talked the gossips. Idle words were said,
And idle questions asked. Death's silent pall
Death's secret kept. Emanuel was dead :
His skull was shattered in that fatal fall,
His face disfigured horribly. With head
Grievously hurt, limbs broken, bruised, and all
Covered with blood and dust, but breathing still,
Back with the dead they bore Glenaveril.

XVI.

Glenaveril? Nay, but dead on his death-bier
Now lay Glenaveril's Earl, Viscount of Lea,
Baron of Auch-na-Lavaroch, a Peer
Of England and of Scotland, twenty-three
Years old two days before the day that here
He came to his untimely end. And he
That still lived on, who was he? There were few
That cared to ask, and there was none that knew.

XVII.

And on the morrow Lord Glenaveril
Was buried with such pomp as the poor place
With much ado could put forth, to fulfil
The obligations due to ancient race,
And noble name, and wealth more precious still,
Ere Death had time completely to efface
The memory of their last possessor. All
Were present at His Lordship's Funeral.

XVIII.

The whole affair was admirably done,
A most well-managed, orderly affair !
Death—*procès verbal*—list of every one
Of the Deceased's effects, which duly were
To the Police made over, who anon
Transmitted them to the legitimate care
Of Her Britannic Majesty's Legation
At Berne, with an appropriate explanation.

XIX.

And thro' the correspondence that ensued,
With mutual satisfaction, in no less
Than twenty notes, the Authorities renewed
The pleasure and the honour to express
The sentiments with which they were imbued :
The Chamouni Magistrate had the happiness
To certify to the Innkeeper's bill
For burying Mylord Glenaveril :

XX.

The British Secretary, with like zest,
Indulged the pleasure of acknowledging
That document, together with the chest
Containing His Late Lordship's watch and ring,
Pins, shirt-studs, sleeve-links, seals and all the rest
Of His Late Lordship's trinkets. Everything
In short was done the best way possible,
And all were pleased that all passed off so well :

XXI.

Mine Host, whom governesses, when well made,
And funerals, when ill-managed, failed to please,
Was paid, and satisfied. The Guides were paid.
The Mutes were paid. The Doctor got his fees
For having proved that his late Lordship's head
Was cracked, and having certified with ease
That it was past his power to mend it. Thus
All were contented, all unanimous,

XXII.

Waiters, and Porters, Clerk and Sexton ! all
The Tourists also ; and the Magistrate
Of Chamouni ; and the two Federal
Swiss Councils, both the Small one and the Great ;
And the Attaché who expressed no small
Delight to have made the acquaintance of the Late
Earl of Glenaveril at his funeral,
An interesting occasion to recall !

XXIII.

But pleased beyond all other men was one,
A Half-pay Officer ; who, all surprise,
While seated by a smoky fire, alone
In a dark London lodging, rubbed his eyes,
Scarce trusting the good news, as he read on ;
When in the *Times* with deepening ecstasies
He saw the telegram that morning sent
From Chamouni about ' the sad event.'

XXIV.

That telegram into his pocket poured
The pleasant promise of a wealth untold ;
It changed those lodgings to three castles, stored
With every kind of luxury ; it rolled
Thro' the dim channels of a life abhorred
Pactolus in a cataract of gold ;
With a fierce sudden joy, that made him start,
It filled that man's mean envious narrow heart—

XXV.

The frenzy of a covetous delight !
Such as in some dim corner, some small cell,
Of a cracked ceiling, a lean spider might
Feel when the web, which, tho' she wove it well,
Hath long been unemployed and empty quite,
Begins to vibrate with the visible
Convulsions of a strangled fly's death-thrill ;
For this man now was Lord Glenaveril.

XXVI.

And the church registers of the decease
Of the late Earl, who, last of his own race,
For this man's gain had passed into the peace
Of death—and all the papers that replace
With perfect regularity (no crease
Unseemly ruffles, and no blots deface)
The irregular emotions that once tore
And tossed the beating heart that beats no more,—

XXVII.

All these, with an official seal well stamped,
Went to rejoin more papers, safely housed
In pigeon-holes along some closely cramped
Official shelf ; where their arrival roused
The swarms of dust about their neighbours camped :
And all those swarms of dust forthwith caroused
And welcomed the new comers with a dance
Danced down a sunbeam they had caught by chance.

XXVIII.

As for Emanuel Müller (the young man
Whom His Late Lordship had picked up, 'twas said,
To teach him German, when he first began
That luckless tour whose sad finale made
Such a sensation among all the clan
Of Alpine Tourists,) he no doubt was paid,
Like all the others, for his ended task ;
And what became of him none cared to ask.

XXIX.

So that when, three months after that event,
There came to the hotel at Chamouni
An old white-headed man, wrinkled and bent,
Who, with a quivering lip, and tear-stained eye,
Having heard all about the accident
Befallen Lord Glenaveril, anxiously
Asked for Emanuel Müller, who could blame
The landlord if he had forgot that name ?

XXX.

At last Mine Host remembered, and replied
‘ Ah yes, His Lordship’s Secretary ! Well,
‘ He was much hurt the day His Lordship died.
‘ That I remember. But I cannot tell
‘ What has become of him. I heard the Guide
‘ Declare it was a perfect miracle
‘ That he survived. But, living still, I know
‘ He left our house more than a month ago.

XXXI.

‘ A Hamburg merchant, who was staying here,
‘ And with his family, I think, arrived
‘ The very morning of the day that dear
‘ Young nobleman unluckily contrived
‘ To break his neck—Just think ! an English Peer,
‘ So young, so rich, so handsome ! had he lived,
‘ We could have spared the other !—Well, I say
‘ That merchant carried the young man away ;

XXXII.

‘ He said, I think, that this young Schmidt—I mean,
‘ Young Müller—was a kinsman of some kind,
‘ A cousin of his wife’s—He must have been
‘ A man that’s well to do, Sir, I’m inclined
‘ To think, that merchant ! and his age between
‘ Fifty and sixty, I should say. But mind,
‘ I know, Sir, nothing of him, further than
‘ The name he gave here, which was Eckermann.

XXXIII.

'He said he would look after that young Schmidt,
'No, Müller—Well, the name's a common one!
'He took the young man with him. Wait a bit!
'Where did they go to? Oh, they must have gone
'Towards Italy, now I remember it.
'Tis all that I remember. If you've done,
'Excuse me! There's a carriage at the door,
'And really I can tell you nothing more.'

XXXIV.

When the old man all these details had heard,
Which told him nothing that he wished to know,
He asked where Lord Glenaveril was interred.
The landlord called the Boots, and bade him show
The place to him. But the old man preferred
To go alone. He went with footsteps slow
And feeble; and, when he returned, his head
Hung lower, and his eyelids were more red.

XXXV.

He did not seem to be a personage
Of any mark, but, as the entry showed
In the hotel-book, on its latest page,
An old philologist, whose name bestowed
Scant lustre on that volume. To his age
Or grief, however, one good thing he owed;
The landlord did for him what he had done
For no one else, and left him quite alone.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

THE GUARDIANS.

CANTO I.—THE DILEMMA.

CANTO II.—JOHN STEEL.

CANTO III.—JOHN STEEL'S DAUGHTER.

CANTO IV.—UTOPIA.



BOOK THE FOURTH.

CANTO I.

THE DILEMMA.

I.

ALL sparkling fresh, and fanned by sweetest air,
Spring half-way up the snowy hill-tops stood ;
Waved her glad hand, and wakened everywhere
A prescient joy in some approaching good ;
But, like a wounded bird that, here and there
Seeking with broken wing its slaughtered brood,
Flutters and limps along a bloodstained path,
Forlornly wandered Father Edelrath.

II.

Alas, poor Father Edelrath ! Of all
Thy simple life's few innocent luxuries,
The sociablest, and most habitual,
Upon thee sprung the cruellest surprise !
That intimate gossip whom thou didst install
At thine own hearth, and whose trite gossipries
To thee were Delphic Sayings, that diurnal
Familiar guest of thine—thy favourite journal,

III.

In whose reports thou hadst so oft admired
The floods of eloquence that nightly flow
Thro' Parliament in torrents never tired,
And laws, unanswerable speeches show
To be by all so urgently required,
That thou didst innocently wonder how
The world, before it ever heard about them,
Had managed to exist at all without them:—

IV.

That combination of benevolence
And wisdom, for life's guidance thro' the maze
Of human error, whose unfailing sense
Of public welfare justified the ways
(Such as they were) of men to Providence—
That manna in the desert of thy days,
That feeder of a faith forever vernal,
That harbinger of joy—thy favourite journal,

V.

Thy favouring fondness ill returned ! Beneath
Its unsuspected talk did treason dwell,
Like a sharp dagger in a silken sheath ;
And the false friend that seemed incapable
Of ever so abusing thy good faith
As to occasion thee, whate'er befell,
The least emotion, by one felon blow
Most treacherously wrought thine overthrow !

VI.

Struck foully at the heart, and on the head,
 Thee from thine easy leathern old arm-chair
 The traitor tumbled, flung thee on thy bed
 Prostrate and powerless, and then left thee there
 Gnawed to the marrow by an ague bred
 From the fell wound its malice dealt thee, where
 This paragraph thro' thy torn brain and heart
 Went burningly, like an envenomed dart :—

VII.

*' We learn from Chamouni with deep regret
 ' The fearful death of a young English peer,
 ' Whose fate a host of mourners will beget.
 ' The victim, Lord Glenaveril, was, we hear,
 ' Just twenty-three ; and all that's known as yet
 ' Of the disaster indicates, we fear,
 ' That an imprudence was, to some extent,
 ' The cause of this deplorable event.*

VIII.

*' His lordship, disregarding the advice
 ' Of both his guides, who urged the risk he ran,
 ' Had climbed, it seems, a dangerous precipice
 ' Without assistance, in his zeal to scan
 ' The whole circumference of the Sea of Ice ;
 ' But the unfortunate young nobleman,
 ' When trying to descend, was dashed to death
 ' Against the edge of a moraine beneath.*

IX.

' *A warning this catastrophe should be*
 ' *To inexperienced Alpine travellers.*
 ' *The titles of Glenaveril and Lea*
 ' *The untimely death of the deceased transfers*
 ' *To a collateral of remote degree,*
 ' *With the estates attached. Report avers*
 ' *That a young Heidelberg Licentiate,*
 ' *Emanuel Müller, shared the dreadful fate*

X.

' *Of the lamented nobleman. P. S.*
 ' *Further particulars which come to hand*
 ' *This moment only, as we go to press,*
 ' *About the accident in Switzerland,*
 ' *Affirm that in complete unconsciousness*
 ' *Young Müller lives yet ; but we understand*
 ' *He cannot long survive (it is believed)*
 ' *The fatal injuries he has received.'*

XI.

When this grim paragraph the old man read
 With consternation, it was not until
 The ghastly news on which it commented
 Was some weeks old. From an insidious chill,
 That with rheumatic fever to his bed
 Till then had bound him, he was suffering still.
 'Pack up my things!' to Agatha anon
 He shouted, 'and make haste! I must begone!'

XII.

But the next moment, tottering, on the floor
With a faint groan he fell. Long while he lay
Clawed by the shrivelling fever's clutch once more :
When he was half recovered, Agatha
Brought him his letters : there was one that bore
The seal and signature of Matthew Gray,
Reporting his dismissal by the new
Earl of Glenaveril. So all was true ;

XIII.

Ivor was dead ; and silence, bleak and bare
As death, revealed Emanuel's fate to him.
Both hope and memory thus together were
Ingulfed in one abyss that to the brim
Was filled with desolation and despair !
Of what is man's soul made that grief so grim,
And pain so keen it can support, yet be
So at the mercy of all misery ?

XIV.

Edelrath would not, without proof, put faith
In his own sorrow. It sufficed him not
To know that Reason, on the side of Death,
Commended resignation to his lot,
Which was the lot of all who dwell beneath
The curse of life, dying piecemeal in what
Life cherishes, to lose it soon or late.
He craved worse evidence of his worst fate ;

XV.

So, with the fever clinging to him still,
He set forth on his way to Chamouni ;
Where, of the death of Lord Glenaveril
And of Emanuel's disappearance, he,
Having learned those details which left him ill
Instructed, and worse helped, was forced to be
Contented with the incomplete success
Of getting—not Herr Eckermann's address,

XVI.

But the Swiss Vetturino's, who alone
Could tell him whither he had driven away
That still-mysterious merchant. Whereupon
The Vetturino's house without delay
He sought, and found there that the man was gone,
On an engagement got the previous day,
A party of French travellers to take
Through Martigny to the Maggiore lake.

XVII.

The Vetturino's son, who knew no more,
Furnished him chaise and horses to pursue
The southward-faring pilgrims ; but, before
His zigzag course was done, he missed the clue ;
For these fatigues, confronted at threescore,
In feeble health, so shattered him anew
That, reaching Sesto, there, in grievous case,
He lost all consciousness of time and place.

XVIII.

A wretched wanderer in an unknown land :
Not only from his home, but from his mind,
A wretched wanderer, he ! How long, alone,
Exploring the hag-haunted caverns blind
Of fever, and its scorching deserts, on
From pain to pain, he lingered thus, confined
To a small chamber, and a narrow bed,
Yet roaming worlds of torment in his head,

XIX.

Edelrath knew not. But, when, thanks at last
To the skilled nursing of a sisterhood
Of neighboring nuns, his fever from him passed,
Around him all was, like himself, renewed
And altered. For, with steps that travelled fast,
The Southern Spring that alpine neighbourhood
Had reached ; and April, with a face as bland
And bright as May's, was lord of all the land.

XX.

From Sesto, then, having been dosed and bled,
And blistered, he resumed the broken quest,
And reached Baveno less alive than dead :
There, finding all night long no moment's rest
From thought and grief, he left a sleepless bed
At early dawn ; and, with a soul possessed
By a monotonous disquietude,
Along the lake his aimless path pursued.

XXI.

Morn's youngest Hour upon her own glad face,
Mirrored in beaming dimples by that lake,
Gazed, giving smile for smile ; in azure space
The lark sang loud ; from many a glossy brake
Warm myrtle buds gleamed white ; a tenderer grace,
A deeper tone the hills began to take
From happy influences hovering
About the cradle of the new-born Spring ;

XXII.

By those sweet influences Edelrath
Was vaguely touched ; his unobservant eye
Scared not an Oread from her azure bath ;
But Presences of blissful augury,
Hovering, breathed about the old man's path
A sense of youth ; and, without knowing why,
To him it seemed that his Glenaveril
And his Emanuel must be living still.

XXIII.

Unconsciously he coasted, as he went,
A little rivulet that wound about
Where thick above its stony channel bent
Large flowering weeds ; it shook them with a shout
Of elfin laughter, as it leapt, unpent
By stalks or stones, and, bustling in and out,
Hurried to reach the lake with garrulous stories
Of snowy hills, and golden alpine glories ;

XXIV.

Downward the way was of the rivulet,
As Edelrath's was upward ; but they kept
Together from the moment that they met,
And side by side one wanderer slowly stepped
As fast the other ran. Thro' thickets wet
With fragrant dews, where in the long grass slept
Light scents his footstep scattered as he passed,
Roaming, he reached an open mound at last ;

XXV.

It was the smooth knee of a mountain lawn ;
Behind it hung a copse of chestnut wood ;
Deep in a dimple of the hill withdrawn,
The white walls of a rose-girt villa stood,
Fronting the lake, and gleaming to the dawn.
Here, for the first time, in less mournful mood,
Edelrath paused, and from this open mound
Gazed on the scene before him and around ;

XXVI.

The broad lake lay beneath him blue and bright,
The apocalyptic sapphire's nameless hue,
Divinely coloured by ethereal light ;
And, basking dreamlike on its bosom blue,
The Borromean islets with their white
Clusters of terraces, dark-plumed by yew
And cypress spires, their myrtle-girt alcoves,
And grottoes glimmering among citron groves ;

XXVII.

Clear from the chestnut copse there came a song,
The song of peasants at some light task singing
Together in the sweet Italian tongue ;
And, from a mountain campanile swinging,
A bell note chimed. Here Nature seemed so young
So fresh, yet with such classic memories clinging
To every sound and every sight, that all
Was like a sweet Virgilian Pastoral.

XXVIII.

The wanderer fell into a reverie,
Which was not sad ; for, in the dream he dreamed,
The past of his own life had ceased to be
A thing remembered ; the World's Past, which
teemed
With tears forgot, ingulfed it as a sea
Ingulfs a rill ; and phantom ages streamed
In misty pomp, and movement undefined,
Athwart the impassive mirror of his mind :

XXIX.

So to the edge of noon unreckoned came
His dreamful hours ; and there, the impersonal spell
Was broken by the sound of his own name
Called gladly by a voice that he knew well.
His life leapt up within him, like a flame
That on a beacon springs aloft to tell
Good tidings from afar. With a faint cry,
Trembling, he turned. The rest was ecstasy ;

XXX.

For Ivor's arms were round him, Ivor's breast
Beating against his own, so strong, so fast,
So loud, and with such jubilant unrest !
'Thee, thee, my child!' the old man sobbed, 'at
last !
'At last, thank God!' His tears said all the rest.
'My friend! my father! tell me why thou hast
'Lingered so long, and left unanswered still
'All my poor letters?' cried Glenaveril.

XXXI.

'And when I had such need of thee! such need!
'Good heavens! so much to ask thee, and to tell,
'And not know where to find thee! O, indeed,
'These days of doubt were scarce endurable,
'Whilst still thy silent absence took no heed
'Of their unanswered cries! But all is well
'Now thou art here at last, where day by day
'Thou hast been wanted more than words can say!'

XXXII.

Edelrath had, without transition, got
From grief to joy. Happiness is the smile
Of Egotism; and the Fates allot
To it the power even Virtue to beguile
So well that with its will she struggles not.
It lasts a moment only; but meanwhile
Over that little moment, as it flits,
The despot's rule no rival claim permits;

XXXIII.

And it is ever its first sovereign act
To banish each remembrance, doubt, or fear
That threatens its dominion to distract.

Glenaveril lived : Glenaveril was here :
And there was no room left beside this fact
For any other : confirmation clear
It gave the faith which had so long denied
Glenaveril's death : what mattered all beside ?

XXXIV.

Living, from him Glenaveril had gone :
Living, to him Glenaveril came back :
These certainties, uniting, became one,
Solid and perfect without flaw or crack :
And if, 'twixt now and then, things had been done
And suffered, they had left behind no track
That to remembrance more substantial seemed
Than what remains of dreams that have been dreamed.

XXXV.

Nevertheless, even reality
Is but a dream ; and, when out of what is
We waken up to what is not, good-bye
To those five fools, the senses ! So was this
Brief moment of delight without alloy
A dream, tho' a reality, of bliss ;
And Edelrath, as from it he awaked,
Fell into a great faintness, tottered, quaked,

XXXVI.

And would have fallen, but that Ivor's arm
Sustained him. Brief was that awakening,
Brief as had been the momentary charm
Of the dream's self, whose loss left everything
Thrown into vague confusion and alarm.

About Glenaveril's presence on faint wing
Hovered Emanuel's absence. 'Ah,' he said
With a bewildered look, 'Who, then, is dead?'

XXXVII.

No need had Ivor to translate the pain
Which his own countenance expressed so well.
'Tis he, then!' murmured Edelrath again
Faintly, 'Emanuel! my Emanuel!'
'Alas,' said Ivor, 'then I wrote in vain!
'My letters reached thee not? and all's to tell
'Which I thought told! Follow me, Edelrath,
'Tis but a step, and easy is the path;

XXXVIII.

'Beyond the chestnuts, underneath the wall
'Of yonder villa, there's a quiet seat
'Where we may sit till I have told thee all.
'Come! for, O friend, of thine assistance great
'And sore my need is!' With mechanical
Submission Edelrath to that retreat
Let Ivor lead him, and along the way
Nothing to one another did they say:

XXXIX.

When they were seated, Ivor told the tale
 Of all that, since their parting, had occurred ;
 Edelrath's face grew paler, and more pale,
 But not a tear escaped him, nor a word.
 What could he say? Words were of no avail,
 Nor tears. When all at last was said and heard
 Still he sat silent, and made no reply.
 Glenaveril broke the silence with a sigh ;

XL.

And, drawing tenderly the old man's hand
 Into his own, he murmured, ' Ah, too late,
 (' Too late, and all too well !) I understand
 ' How wise thy warning, not to deviate
 ' A hair's breadth from the truth ! We may command
 ' The first step, but the next belongs to Fate.
 ' Yet this time, Edelrath, both he and I
 ' Were honest in our little comedy ;

XLI.

' We acted it together in good faith,
 ' And with good reason, tho' Fate turned it all,
 ' By my dear only brother's dreadful death,
 ' To a catastrophe so tragical !
 ' As for myself, long had I held my breath
 ' In fear lest from my lips should ever fall
 ' Some idle word, by prudence unapproved,
 ' To pain the proud heart of the man I loved ;

XLII.

‘ Nature had given to Emanuel
‘ A spirit statelier than mine, whilst me
‘ Fortune had placed upon a pinnacle
‘ That made me seem above him. I and he,
‘ Who loved each other more than words can tell,
‘ (God knows I loved him more than all save thee !)
‘ Were thus unable to clasp hands, except
‘ Across a barrier never overstepped ;

XLIII.

‘ Tho’ built by circumstance, that barrier
‘ Was not so permanently built, I knew,
‘ That circumstance, which changes oftener
‘ Than sentiment, was powerless to undo
‘ What it had done. ’Tis easy to transfer
‘ The gifts of fortune, and, indeed, how few
‘ Can keep them ! ’Twas not circumstance, but pride,
‘ That stood between us—not upon my side !

XLIV.

‘ That pride was natural. I understood,
‘ I honoured it, but trembled all the more
‘ Lest by some casual word or attitude
‘ Even I might wound it unawares. I bore
‘ A title, which Emanuel lacked ; it would,
‘ I knew, just suit him till our tour was o’er,
‘ And so I lent it to him, as I’d lend
‘ My horse to any badly-mounted friend ;

XLV.

‘ But there were other reasons. I felt sure,
‘ And still feel sure, that it was good to make
‘ This trial of the only chance to cure
‘ Emanuel’s moral ailment. For his sake
‘ I urged it. Strange disgust of his obscure
‘ Lineage and lot with a continual ache
‘ Was gnawing at his heart. In that condition
‘ The one thing needed was a changed position ;

XLVI.

‘ Finding himself in an entirely new
‘ Relation to the world, he would have seen
‘ The same things from a different point of view,
‘ And have despised that barrier between
‘ His pride and his affection, when he knew
‘ How blindly the whole force of it had been
‘ Based on a misconception of the worth
‘ Of the most vulgar prejudice on earth.

XLVII.

‘ Hadst thou but seen with what a natural grace
‘ He bore his borrowed title, and how well
‘ It sat upon him ! Then, in the next place,
‘ This pact between me and Emanuel
‘ Was made before, in quite another case,
‘ Thy disapproval so severely fell
‘ On our exchange of names, and we were both
‘ Pledged to fulfil it by a solemn oath ;

XLVIII.

' Nevertheless, I own that thy reproof
 ' About that letter to Cordelia
 ' Which thou thyself didst burn, for the behoof
 ' Of all concerned, before we went away,
 ' Would have induced me still to keep aloof
 ' From this poor masquerade (altho' the play
 ' Seemed innocent enough) if only he
 ' Had been disposed to let the matter be ;

XLIX.

' But, with a bitter jest, when we set out
 ' From Heidelberg, he claimed the most exact
 ' Fulfilment of it. It was all, no doubt,
 ' Fatality, from first to last, that pact !
 ' And now a miracle has come about,
 ' For, though incredible, 'tis still a fact,
 ' That letter, which thou didst so justly blame—
 ' My letter, written in Emanuel's name—

L.

' That letter, thou didst burn before mine eyes—
 ' Cordelia has received it ! ' To his feet
 Edelrath sprang in vehement surprise.
 ' How dost thou know that ? ' he exclaimed : and,
 sweet
 As sunbeams flashing over April skies,
 The light in Ivor's face, as from the seat
 He pointed, with a soft mysterious air,
 Towards the villa, whispering ' She is there ! '

LI.

The old man sank upon the bench again
 Without a sound, and sat confounded quite
 By those three words ; while in ecstatic strain,
 Not noticing the miserable plight
 Which his poor friend was powerless to explain,
 Ivor went on. ‘ Yes, she is there ! Love’s might
 ‘ Works miracles ; and, call it dream, romance,
 ‘ I care not, it hath conquered circumstance !

LII.

‘ O Edelrath, my friend, my father, heart
 ‘ To heart, one thought was able to unite
 ‘ Two lives an ocean could not keep apart,
 ‘ And she is come ! is here ! and O delight,
 ‘ She loves me ! loves me ! Ah, thou well may’st start,
 ‘ For I am blest beyond belief ! in spite
 ‘ Of Fortune’s fiat, and Fate’s bitterest
 ‘ Bereavement, I am blest, supremely blest !

LIII.

‘ Blest more than I deserve ! yet none the less
 ‘ Punished, and punished more than I can bear,
 ‘ By the conditions of a happiness
 ‘ That’s a remorse which nothing can repair !
 ‘ This love of hers, what right have I to press
 ‘ Its solace to my heart ? What power to tear
 ‘ My heart away from it ? In Heaven I dwell
 ‘ Pursued forever by the pangs of Hell !

LIV.

' Ah, couldst thou guess what an accursèd maze
' Of irremediable mystery
' Is all around me! Right, or left, all ways,
' Along which every footstep seems a lie,
' Turn where I will, still open to my gaze
' No issue from the labyrinth where I
' Find in each gossamer thread an iron fetter
' That chains me, fast as truth, to that false letter !

LV.

' I am become the guilty-innocent
' Guardian of what, tho' misassigned to me,
' Can never be another's. He, she meant
' The blest possessor of that gift to be,
' Would have rejected it. Blind instrument
' Of Fate, from this dilemma nought can free
' My fettered anguish. To destroy her faith
' Were to destroy her life. Truth would be death.

LVI.

' *Her* death! And I must either lie or kill !
' And I must be, in either case, accurst !
' Do murder, or else go on lying still ?
' O can there be a worse beyond this worst ?'
Edelrath gazed upon Glenaveril,
Feeling as if his swollen heart must burst
With what was in it, and said mournfully
' Child, if there's anyone to blame, 'tis I.'

LVII.

‘Thou?’ cried Glenaveril, in amazement. ‘Yes,’
 He sighed, ‘my fault it is, and mine alone,
 ‘That letter has arrived at its address.
 Listen!’ And he explained the error known
 Too late to be repaired. As his distress
 Augmented, Ivor’s vanished; in a tone
 Of infinite relief, he cried, elate,
 ‘Ah, ’twas predestined! ’Tis the will of Fate.

LVIII.

‘Thou seest that nothing could have altered it,
 ‘And nought can now undo what has been done!
 ‘I understand, and to Fate’s will submit;
 ‘Clearly she said to me, “Of two things, one
 “I give thee: both together were unfit:
 “Thine may be either by itself alone;
 “Love, or a name: the name is for the dead,
 “The love, for life: choose!” That is what Fate said,

LIX.

‘And made my choice is! Say not I deceive.
 ‘Faith from its object separate who can!
 ‘Who can believe in God yet not believe?
 ‘Never did God say to the Mussulman,
 “Jehovah is My Name!” From dawn to eve
 ‘All Islam, ever since its faith began,
 ‘Calling on Allah, worships God, the same
 ‘As we who call Him by another name;

LX.

‘ And be the worship to Jehovah given,
‘ Or given to Allah, not on any one
‘ Of all the names men’s worship wafts to Heaven,
‘ But on the men themselves, and them alone,
‘ Hindu, Jew, Christian, Mussulman, or even
‘ The savage who, poor soul, adores a stone
‘ Rather than not adore at all, be sure
‘ Faith’s truth depends. I know that mine is pure !

LXI.

‘ Cordelia loves me. If Emanuel still
‘ The name whereby she loves me chance to be,
‘ ’Tis mine—more mine than is Glenaveril !
‘ And I will own no other. Love to me
‘ This name hath given. When by the gardener’s skill
‘ A peach is grafted on an almond-tree,
‘ Men call that tree a peach-tree ; branch and root,
‘ ’Tis named and known henceforward by its fruit ;

LXII.

‘ So with my name and love ! Heaven hath ordained
‘ That, by a miracle, earth’s fairest flower
‘ Henceforth by my life’s stem shall be sustained,
‘ With my love’s essence filled from hour to hour,
‘ On my heart’s substance grafted and engrained,
‘ And to disjoin it, death alone hath power !
‘ If the world’s herbal is deranged thereby,
‘ That is the world’s affair. Who cares ? not I !’

LXIII.

More frightened by Glenaveril's vehemence
Than by his reasoning influenced (and afraid
That he might only render more intense
The undesired impression he had made,
If he opposed the disputable sense
Of all that Ivor in his joy had said)
Edelrath sought by indirect reflections
To insinuate suggestions and objections ;

LXIV.

'Twould not be easy to keep unsuspected
For long, he said, the strange equivocation
Which accident had until now protected ;
And then he dwelt upon the wealth and station
Glenaveril needs must lose if he rejected
His name and title ; with an admiration
Meant to discourage what it seemed to prize,
He urged the grandeur of the sacrifice ;

LXV.

But 'Sacrifice !' cried Ivor, fierce almost,
'And canst thou speak of sacrifice to me,
'Who am the cause of all that she hath lost ?
'Think ! at a word from one who loved her, she
('In faith sublime that worth the price it cost,
'The love which he professed for her would be)
'Stripped herself of the millions she possessed !
'Vast wealth was hers ; and all, at love's behest,

LXVI.

'She sacrificed—for what? To satisfy
'Another's whim! And I, the plunderer
'Of her whole fortune, must forsooth deny
'To Duty what she grudged not to confer
'On Love, without a murmur! Heavens! that I,
'For whom earth holds nought to compare with her,
'Should stake her love, her faith, her life itself,
'Against a miserable heap of pelf!

LXVII.

'No! by the grave of my dead mother, no!
'No, by all human truth! Whate'er I be,
'I am, thank God, incapable I know
'Of such unutterable villany!
'And as for this unhappy secret, O
'To whom can it be known but thee and me?
'Is not the grave forever closed on it?
'Dumb are the shut doors of the charnel pit!

LXVIII.

'In the next place, consider' . . . 'Hush! no more!
Said Edelrath. 'Thou hast not understood.
'I needed not to be convinced before,
'Nor need I fresh conviction now, how good
'And true is Ivor's heart; but mine is sore
'And troubled; such an unknown multitude
'Of thronging thoughts, so dim and thick with doubt,
'O'ercome me! Give me time to think them out.

LXIX.

' Surely nought presses. Saidst thou she is there ?
' Well, let me see her, Ivor ! I believe
' Thou canst not doubt my succour in whate'er
' May best my dear boy's happiness achieve.
' Lead me to her on whom thou dost declare
' That happiness depends. I shall perceive
' Better, when I too know her as thou dost,
' What may be best for both of you, I trust.'

LXX.

' O, as to that, I can already tell
' That thou, when thou hast known her as I do,
' Wilt call me, as she does, Emanuel !'
Said Ivor, smiling. And between the two,
With thoughts evasive of each article
That it contained, and pledges but half true,
This armistice was signed, as others are
When peace is all that has been gained by war.

LXXI.

When Edelrath, with Ivor, passed the gate
Into the garden of the house close by,
He saw approaching him, with looks elate,
A girl whose form, in its simplicity
Of beauty, justified at any rate
The young man's passion to the old man's eye.
She held out both her hands ; and with a glowing
Enchanting smile her face was overflowing,

LXXII.

As 'Welcome, she exclaimed, 'long-awaited friend!
'Too late it is to make acquaintance now,
'Let us begin, then, where we needs must end
'Sooner or later, for full well I know
'Friends we must be, nor is time left to spend
'On being less.' She said this with a low
Sweet laugh, and looks, words, tones, and gestures, all
Were gracefully and nobly natural.

LXXIII.

The poor Professor's attitude just then
Was more embarrassed, and less frank, no doubt;
His hand he had lifted to his hat; but, when
He saw those two white hands to his stretched out,
He gave up that politeness, changed again
His posture, and began to set about
Pulling his gloves off with a desperate jerk;
This was, however, tediously tough work.

LXXIV.

And unsuccessful; overcome thereby
He failed in the attempt to formulate
Some sort of civil, suitable reply;
And, in this singularly awkward state
Of mind and body, 'twas in vain to try
A fourth form of politeness. But the great
Cause of the trouble that perplexed and harassed him
Was in his eyes, whose conduct much embarrassed
him.

LXXV.

Those eyes kept gazing on the young girl's face,
As hers on his. There was in her regard
No shyness and no coquetry—no trace
Of anything affected, forced, or hard,
Or vulgarly familiar. In like case
What should a man's arms do? they are debarred
From seeing and from hearing what goes on ;
Their part therein is a forgotten one ;

LXXVI.

And, at the last, impatient of suppressed
Activity in such a crisis, they
(By sudden curiosity possessed)
Invariably fly open ; in this way
They leave imprudently exposed the breast
Which they are there to guard as best they may ;
Then, suddenly, they both become aware
Of something that has slid between them there ;

LXXVII.

And, in surprise returning to their post,
They find already occupied the place
They left defenceless, for a minute at most ;
Too late their captive do they then enlace ;
The heart they should have guarded hath been lost !
And this is how it happens, folks embrace,
And happens too, that thus embracing, they
Their hearts wide open to each other lay.

LXXVIII.

This must, at least, suffice for the excuse
 Of Father Edelrath, to whom so quick
 It happened, that he had no time to choose
 What he should do, or not do, nor to pick
 The expressions it were best for him to use ;
 Those which came first in Feeling's throng, that
 thick
 And throbbing, rushed like spirits from their spheres,
 He took without a choice, and they were tears ;

LXXIX.

So fast he fell a-weeping like a child.
 'Ah, this is well, and as I knew 'twould be !'
 Cordelia murmured, lifting eyes that smiled
 Thro' sunny dew's ; for still the first was she
 To speak. And Edelrath, scarce reconciled
 To his own boldness, stammered, 'Pardon me !'
 For all, when placed in such a situation,
 Seek to explain what least needs explanation ;

LXXX.

'Pardon me,' he continued, 'Mademoiselle !'
 'No, not the *Mademoiselle*, not that !' replied
 Cordelia. 'That is unforgivable.
 'I am your daughter, and—ah see,' she cried,
 'Here comes my Guardian ! He, I know full well
 'Is come to capture you, for he has spied
 'Your presence, and since he expected you
 'Long since, he will not loose you soon, I know.'"

LXXXI.

Then, turning to Herr Eckermann, whose tread
 Now sounded briskly on the gravel path,
 And whose broad countenance gleamed moist and red,
 As if emerging from a vapour bath,
 ‘Our friend, thou seest, is come at last,’ she said.
 ‘And I present to thee Herr Edelrath.
 ‘Take care of him!’ The ex-merchant was ‘en-
 charnted
 ‘To meet *et cætera*.’ He puffed, and panted,

LXXXII.

‘Your chamber, Herr Professor, has long been
 ‘Prepared for your arrival, and—Dear me,
 ‘Here comes my wife!’ (Frau Eckermann between
 Her two girls joined the group). ‘My dear,’ said he,
 ‘Our much esteemed and honored friend—I mean
 ‘The Herr Professor Edelrath,—is free,
 ‘I trust, to make with us a lengthened stay.
 ‘You cannot be in haste to go away?’

LXXXIII.

He added, turning quickly to his guest ;
 And then, without awaiting a reply,
 ‘No, no, you have no cause, Sir, to be pressed,
 ‘You are not married, have no family.
 ‘Freedom of movement is a bachelor’s best
 ‘Of compensations. In the lottery
 ‘Of marriage, Sir, it is not every one
 ‘That draws out the *gros lot*, as I have done!’

LXXXIV.

And, as he guided Edelrath away
Pantingly down the cypress alley, thro'
The garden, to the rose-girt loggia,
'Ah,' he continued, 'if you only knew
'How great a blessing to me, every day,
'That wife of mine is! After twenty-two
'Years of it, I affirm that a good wife
'Is all pure profit to a man's whole life;

LXXXV.

'And look you, Sir, with women it is not
'As with all other kinds of merchandise;
'With them, there is no profit to be got
'From doing business in large quantities;
'They are indeed worth little in the lot.
'But pick and choose, and if you get a prize
'Make much of it, say I! And, Sir, I guess
'That there's a management in happiness;

LXXXVI.

'Happy and honest, if a man would be,
'His dealings let him strictly regulate
'With his own heart and conscience, just as he
'From time to time would overhaul the state
'Of his transactions in gamboge, or tea,
'Or coffee; keep his balance-sheet quite straight,
'Know what he owes, and what he has to get;
'Sure that his credit still exceeds his debt.

LXXXVII.

'As for myself, if in life's balance-sheet
 'My happiness stands wholly to the good,
 'I owe that to two persons. I repeat,
 'My wife's an angel! this is understood;
 'But, next to her, I owe it (as 'tis meet
 'That you should know) to the solicitude
 'Of the dear father of Cordelia.
 'Ah, what a man! A genuine man, I say!

LXXXVIII.

'Had you but known him as I knew, and know!
 'No matter! Of all this we'll talk anon;
 'We've time enough; you must be weary now;
 'You look so. Well, our little walk is done,
 'And yonder window that we stand below,
 'There is your chamber! It looks out upon
 'The lake, you see. A fine view, and fresh air!
 'This way! Allow me to conduct you there.'

LXXXIX.

'Most willingly!' with a contented smile,
 Said Edelrath. 'At least, on one condition;
 'That you, good Sir, will honour me meanwhile
 'With mine host's company, and his permission
 'To think that I its wall shall not defile,
 'If in that room a place I requisition
 'For this old friend.' And, without more ado,
 Forth from his pocket a long pipe he drew.

XC.

‘With all my heart!’ exclaimed Herr Eckermann.
 ‘What! ’tis the good old porcelain pipe? The true,
 ‘The genuine, German! Ah, my friend, I can
 ‘Regale you with tobacco such as you
 ‘Might seek in vain from Beersheba to Dan,
 ‘Pure Porto Rico! I’m a smoker too,
 ‘And know what’s what. A fig for your cigars!
 ‘Wait till you’ve tested my tobacco-jars!’

XCI.

So saying, in the brimful jollity
 Of a hard worker who has earned repose,
 Enjoys it thoroughly, and loves to see
 His own good humour fully shared by those
 Around him, wheresoever he may be,
 With a contented snorting of the nose
 And twinkling of the eye, the good man led
 His guest upstairs. ‘Ah, here we are!’ he said,

XCII.

And open wide he flung the chamber door.
 The tired guest hailed that chamber’s welcome
 sight,
 As a spent swimmer hails the sheltering shore.
 The walls, the chairs, the sofas, all were white
 And amber, as the amber-spiked white core
 Of a cool lily. In a soothed delight
 Edelrath sank upon a sofa there,
 And Eckermann beside it drew his chair.

CANTO II.

JOHN STEEL.

I.

THE character of Jonathan Eckermann,
 (Whom all his friends, and many friends had he
In many countries, called Herr Jonathan)
 Was, like his fortune, in no small degree
A happy product of American
 Shrewdness, combined with German honesty,
And something else, which in a special sense
Was all his own—a brisk benevolence.

II.

For Edelrath, who now began to feel
 By no means indisposed to break his fast,
Frau Eckermann, with hospitable zeal,
 Already had prepared a light repast ;
And when due honour to his welcome meal
 His guest had done, and guest and host at last
Had lighted each his pipe, Herr Jonathan
Thus with Herr Edelrath his talk began :

III.

' Believe me, Herr Professor, when I say
 ' That I have long desired this interview.
 ' We to each other, Sir, have much to say,
 ' Much that concerns us both, about these two
 ' Children of ours—children in every way,
 ' Children in years, and (between me and you)
 ' In innocence almost incredible.
 ' And first of all, now, there's Emanuel,

IV.

' What's to become of him? The youngster has
 ' Nor kith, nor kin, you see, nor staff, nor scrip ;
 ' The late catastrophe that put, alas,
 ' So sad an end to his relationship
 ' With that young English nobleman, who was
 ' Beloved by both of you, has helped to strip
 ' All his life's props from it. So you and I
 ' To prop it now by other means must try.

V.

' I say, Sir, you and I, because, no doubt,
 ' The loss of your almost-adopted son
 ' Must deepen your solicitude about
 ' All of him that is left to you in one
 ' Who was his more than second self, without
 ' Speaking, moreover, of the brave deed done
 ' By poor Emanuel, when that fatal day
 ' Snatched, with his friend's life, half his own away.

VI.

‘No more of that! It is a long-felt need
‘That I relieve in opening my whole mind
‘To one whose wit and judgment far exceed
‘My narrow common sense. You are inclined,
‘Your face assures me, to give friendly heed
‘To what I have to say, and I shall find
‘In you a wise confederate I know—
‘But if I speak too freely, tell me so!’

VII.

Edelrath grasped, in prompt and warm reply,
The hand held out to him. ‘Dear Sir,’ he said,
‘Your frankness but anticipates what I
‘Would else have asked. But do not deem me led
‘By merely idle curiosity
‘In first soliciting, at least, some shred
‘Of information about all that passed
‘Before you met’—he paused, with eyes downcast,

VIII.

And faltered, checked by his disinclination
To make himself a partner in the plan
He disapproved, of that impersonation
Which every moment more and more began
To embarrass him throughout this conversation.
But unsuspectingly, Herr Jonathan
Went on. ‘You mean,’ he said, ‘before we met
‘Emanuel.’ ‘Yes, yes! ere I forget,’

IX.

Said Edelrath, 'allow me to explain
 'That I am here to-day by accident.
 "'Tis true I sought Emanuel,' (he was fain
 To energize this statement, for it meant
 No more than the strict truth) 'but all in vain!
 'The letters which, I since have heard, were sent
 'To Heidelberg had reached me not, and by
 'The merest chance it was I met'—'Ay, ay,

X.

'A providential chance it was, no doubt!'
 Said Eckermann, 'he told me that just now.
 'Ever since he, poor boy, could get about—
 '(For I must tell you, if you do not know,
 'He has been desperately ill—without [how,
 'Cordelia's aid, which saved him, Heaven knows
 'He must have died)—but ever since the day
 'He without crutches could make any way,

XI.

'Emanuel has been wandering everywhere
 'Around this neighbourhood in search of you,
 'Now wild with hope, now wilder with despair:
 'His letters must have missed you—that he knew;
 'Still, he felt sure that he should find you there
 'Sooner or later. And most strangely, too,
 'Has his conviction now been justified.
 "'Tis Providence, not Chance, that was your guide!'

XII.

'You see,' said Edelrath, 'what interest deep
 'I needs must feel in all that you alone
 'Can tell me. In suspense no longer keep
 'So good a listener. Speak to me as one
 'Who knows no more than that there rests, to weep
 'With him the loss of what from both is gone,
 'One only now of the two dear young hearts
 'That halved his own, for theirs were equal parts.'

XIII.

A gleam of lively satisfaction lit
 The eyes of Eckermann. The chance to vent
 His heart of what had long been bursting it
 With big discourse, for lack of listeners pent,
 Kindled within his garrulous soul a fit
 Of that self-laudatory sentiment
 Which doubtless filled with unacknowledged joy
 The pious hero of the Fall of Troy,

XIV.

When his *infandum* (with feigned hesitation)
Regina jubet renovare he
 Poured forth so glibly for the delectation
 Of Dido; tho' the truth would seem to be
 That of that classical expostulation
 Eckermann's knowledge equalled in degree
 The simulating hero's want of will
 To talk so well of what he did so ill;

XV.

But, for his audience, it must here be said
The famous Founder of the Italian Race
On that occasion was not comforted
By the attention of a keener face
Than his for whom this tale's unclassic thread
Was spun, with neither dignity nor grace,
By one whose triremes and exploits were known
To the Exchange and Custom House alone.

XVI.

'Well you must know, then,' said Herr Jonathan,
('Twas by this formula that his narration
The worthy merchant artlessly began)
'The reason of that intimate relation
'You find between Cordelia and a man
'Who, like myself, is not by education
'Or character what you'd expect to see
'The Guardian, Sir, of such a girl as she ;

XVII.

'But, Sir, her father's oldest clerk was I ;
'The oldest and most trusted of them all.
'And what a man was he ! Were I to try
'To give you an idea, however small,
'Of his stupendous enterprises, why
'I should be months about it, and still fall
'Short of the mark. All difficulties were
'Trifles to him ; he played with them, I swear,

XVIII.

‘As jugglers play with cup and ball. Altho’
 ‘I do not mean that Johann Stahl was ever
 ‘A gambler, or a speculator. No,
 ‘I mean that without visible endeavour
 ‘He did what nobody but he could do,
 ‘Invariably succeeding in whatever
 ‘He undertook. The envious used to say
 ‘(Envy can always explain worth away)

XIX.

‘“’Twas all his luck.” His luck ! I’ll tell you what,
 ‘His luck, Sir, was *himself* ! ’Twas intellect,
 ‘Genius, and courage. Not a doubt of that !
 ‘Everywhere, folks see only the effect ;
 ‘The cause of it they never will be at
 ‘The trouble to discover. They detect
 ‘A little earth-mound somewhere ; that’s the whole
 ‘Of what they see ; and they exclaim. “A mole !”

XX.

‘A mole? Good Lord ! that’s not so very hard
 ‘To find out, is it? Yet, in spite of this,
 ‘The mole’s not there ; the mole is many a yard
 ‘Away ; not one of them knows where he is.
 ‘To right? to left? in front? behind? The sward
 ‘Shows nothing but that little mound of his,
 ‘To make which what long tunnels have there been,
 ‘What burrowings incessant and unseen !

XXI.

' And so it is with those, Sir, who in trade,
' Or commerce, or industrial affairs,
' Have by their genius and their patience made
' Colossal fortunes. Palaces are theirs,
' They never dance in: tables richly laid
' For feasts, the man who gives them seldom shares.
' If you would find these fortune-makers, go,
' Seek them where they are working. Ah, but no!

XXII.

' None ever seeks them where they may be found:
' All see their work's result: the world says, "Pray,
' "Whose is that fine estate?" and I'll be bound
' Some Puss-in-Boots is always by to say,
' Purring for pride, with scrapes and bows profound,
' (Such is those creatures' customary way!)
' "That is my master's, the most noble lord
' "Marquess of Carabas, upon my word!"

XXIII.

' Ay! the possessor of such palaces
' And parks is always, as I chance to know,
' A little of a marquess. But it is
' Not near enough to be a little, no,
' Nor yet a deal, of all the marquesses
' That ever were, to do what these men do—
' The great commercial Carabases, they
' Who thro' Trade's Fairyland, have won their way!

XXIV.

‘No, Sir! Such men must have an iron will,
‘And heads and hands of iron. And that’s not
‘Enough, even then. ’Tis necessary still,
‘That all this iron should be heated hot
‘To a white heat, and hissing plunged, until
‘Its strength has to the finest temper got,
‘In ice-cold water. Iron by degrees
‘Thus turns to steel—then, call it how you please!

XXV.

‘Cordelia’s father such a man I call.
‘A man of steel, but steel of temper rare!
‘His German name was little, if at all,
‘Known in America: men everywhere
‘Called him John Steel, and, Sir, we never shall
‘See such a man again! Beyond compare
‘The greatest, noblest, man I ever knew,
‘As strong as steel, as polished, and as true!

XXVI.

‘Nothing cared he for profit or for gain.
‘The invention, the discovery, the plan,
‘The projects vast of his creative brain,
‘These were what wholly occupied the man.
‘At work you should have seen him! and again
‘You should have seen him in repose! I can
‘No more tell when I most admired John Steel,
‘Than you could tell—the price of cochineal!

XXVII.

' In all he was, and did, he seemed to tower
 ' Immeasurably above other men :
' His huge activity, his giant power
 ' Of work, his sovereign hand and searching ken,
' These were apparent to the crowd of lower
 ' Existences, and weaker wills, that, when
' He chose it, his magnetic touch could stir
' With an imparted strength of character;

XXVIII.

' But none could sound the depth of tenderness
 ' In that strong heart—how deeply it could feel
' For others, and how softly, none could guess,
 ' Who with his daughter had not seen John Steel.
' And to be sure, Cordelia is no less
 ' Above all women (ay, Sir, and a deal
' Above the best !) than, I affirm again,
' Cordelia's father was above all men.

XXIX.

' Sir, you have seen her : have you ever seen
 ' Her equal among women ? Every one
' Who meets her feels in presence of a Queen,
 ' And what a Queen ! In all the world is none
' To be compared to her. Face, figure, mien,
 ' Voice, manners, every gesture, every tone,
' And above all, heart, character, and mind,
' In all, she is the flower of womankind !

XXX.

‘ And just to think, Sir, that this queenly creature
‘ Should be the child of a mere working-man
‘ And a mere working-woman ! Truly, Nature
‘ Is full of mysteries ! None greater than
‘ Those children in whose every trait and feature
‘ She wins a race their parents never ran,
‘ And crowns a destiny of which, gaze round her
‘ Where’er you will, you cannot find the founder !

XXXI.

‘ Cordelia, Sir, is not a work of art,
‘ Nor is she Nature’s common growth. In all
‘ She is supreme : from all she stands apart :
‘ Nothing is studied, nothing casual,
‘ About her : as her face is, so her heart :
‘ Both have a charm that’s purely natural,
‘ Yet most uncommon : it is not acquired,
‘ Nor is it copied : it appears inspired.

XXXII.

‘ I’ve watched her from her cradle. She has grown
‘ But has not changed. Before her birth, before
‘ Her father’s marriage, before Steel was known
‘ By that surpassing opulence, he bore
‘ As a born king the burden of a crown
‘ That’s light to him, I was, I may say, more
‘ Than his mere confidential clerk. And so
‘ The story of Cordelia’s birth I know.

XXXIII.

‘ I knew her mother—rest her soul with God !
‘ And where else should that gentle spirit be ?
‘ This earth no meeker creature ever trod,
‘ Tho’ as for brains, not much of those had she !
‘ Her life seemed one mute waiting on the nod
‘ Of her protector. You must know that he
‘ Had from her parents rescued her, they say,
‘ Body and soul ; and, heavens, what parents they !

XXXIV.

‘ We will not speak of them. When this occurred
‘ She was a child. She could not read, or write,
‘ Or even count her fingers.” In a word,
‘ She seemed to be almost, Sir, if not quite,
‘ An idiot. Poor young creature ! I have heard
‘ That a somnambulist is one whose sight
‘ And hearing, speech and motion, all fulfil
‘ The mandate of some other person’s will ;

XXXV.

‘ I never wished to see, nor ever saw,
‘ Any such thing. All cases, I confess,
‘ Of aberrations from the wholesome law
‘ Of human nature’s common course, distress
‘ My mind with feelings, not so much of awe,
‘ As of disgust at their unnaturalness ;
‘ And that is why I never without pain
‘ Can call to mind the image of poor Jane.

XXXVI.

‘ You would have said that all she did was done
‘ By an automaton ; as if her mind
‘ Out of her body somewhere else had gone,
‘ While her mechanical life remained behind.
‘ Those with whom Steel had placed her (for alone
‘ She could not live with him, and they were kind)
‘ Averred that in her sleep the child became
‘ So altered, they scarce knew her for the same ;

XXXVII.

‘ Soon as sleep closed her eyes (altho’ they were
‘ Beautiful eyes) her face, they said, would take
‘ In slumber a more animated air
‘ Than it retained while she was still awake,
‘ And her lips moved. The woman in whose care
‘ She lived, once having tried in vain to break
‘ The child’s unslumbrous sleep, began to feel
‘ Alarmed, and sent a message to John Steel ;

XXXVIII.

‘ He came ; they led him to her room ; he stayed
‘ Beside her several hours ; and what took place
‘ During that time I never knew. ’Twas said
‘ That in her sleep (and I’ve been told the case
‘ Tho’ rare is not unknown) this little maid,
‘ If questioned, would reply with a strange grace
‘ Of language, and a quite uncommon sense,
‘ Wholly beyond a child’s intelligence ;

XXXIX.

'All that I know is, shortly after this
'(And, as you may suppose, to the no small
'Astonishment of his acquaintances)
'Jane Hope became Steel's wife. But what I call
'The most surprising thing about it, is
'That she herself showed no surprise at all
'She thro' the marriage ceremony went
'As if quite unconcerned in that event ;

XL.

'And from the look of her you would have said
'That into church the girl had strolled that day
'Only to see some other person wed.
'After her marriage, just in the same way,
'She led the life that she had always led :
'Her constant occupation (and they say
'That in such handiwork, at least, poor thing !
'She had no equal) was embroidering.

XLI.

'Steel treated her with a profound respect,
'Which never showed the slightest variation ;
'No sovereign of a court the most select
'Could be approached with more consideration,
'No mistress more unchided, more unchecked,
'No pontiff less exposed to disputation,
'Than John Steel's wife. Yet in her silent cell
'Never did nun, more closely-cloistered, dwell ;

XLII.

‘ Nor could her spouse, if sick of household strife,
‘ Have oftener left her ; but she did not don
‘ Those airs resigned of a long-suffering wife,
‘ Some worthy women with less cause put on :
‘ She knew that his must be a busy life,
‘ And hers a life comparatively lone :
‘ Both seemed to find in each what each required :
‘ And nothing more by either was desired.

XLIII.

‘ Before Cordelia’s birth, her mother made
‘ A baby wardrobe for the unborn child ;
‘ Rare broidery of intricate braid
‘ On all the little frocks and caps she piled ;
‘ And, as she worked it, quietly she said
‘ (And, as she said it, quietly she smiled)
‘ This broidery was with hieroglyphics sown,
‘ Concerning her child’s future and her own ;

XLIV.

‘ She said that, in the broidered emblems there,
‘ ’Twas written (and it happened certainly
‘ Just as she said) the child she was to bear
‘ Would be a girl, and she herself would die
‘ When the child’s life was in its second year.
‘ With no disease, no struggle, scarce a sigh,
‘ In John Steel’s arms, she passed away from earth
‘ One year and nine months after the child’s birth.

XLV.

‘ Far oftener than to church he ever went,
‘ Henceforth his wont was at her grave to pray ;
‘ Each time, too, with a look of strange content
‘ And deep serenity, he came away,
‘ As from a shrine to which the sick are sent
‘ For cures miraculous. In fact, there lay
‘ In John Steel’s vigorous nature, after all,
‘ A something dreamy and fantastical ;

XLVI.

‘ That he was superstitious—well, that’s more
‘ Than I should like to say. But I could see
‘ He had peculiar notions on the score
‘ Of certain influences—things that we
‘ Call supernatural,—tho’ he forebore
‘ From ever speaking of such things to me ;
‘ Indeed, he spoke of them, I think, to none,
‘ Unless it were Cordelia alone ;

XLVII.

‘ And it is my belief that even to her
‘ Her father was, and wisely, more or less
‘ Reserved on that side of his character ;
‘ Only, Cordelia has the power to guess
‘ And understand, miraculously, Sir,
‘ Whatever, in the innermost recess
‘ Of their own hearts, those round her think and feel ;
‘ And John Steel’s daughter knew by heart John Steel.

XLVIII.

‘ From his ideas, and from his alone,
‘ (For this, at least, could come from no one else)
‘ Cordelia has inherited her own,
‘ That ’tis her destiny and Emanuel’s
‘ To realize the love which Fortune’s frown
‘ And Fate’s accumulated obstacles
‘ Forbade their parents, who conceived it first,
‘ To cherish save in visions vainly nursed.

XLIX.

‘ I might as well have tried, I must confess,
‘ To open oyster-shells without a knife,
‘ As, from my knowledge of them both, to guess
‘ The part by Jane Hope played in John Steel’s life ;
‘ But trust a woman for clear-sightedness
‘ In all affairs of sentiment ! My wife
‘ Explained it all to me ; for she, Sir, who
‘ Knows how to put together two and two,

L.

‘ Observed that in Jane Hope (that poor forlorn
‘ Half-witted sufferer, as to me she seemed !)
‘ John Steel imagined that a Seeress born
‘ Was sent him ; all whose sayings he esteemed
‘ As messages from Mary Haggerdorn ;
‘ Poor Jane asserting that the dreams she dreamed
‘ Maintained in close communion with each other
‘ Cordelia’s father and Emanuel’s mother.

LI.

‘ In short, it was John Steel’s belief (strange fad
‘ In one so practical and sensible !)
‘ That this Jane Hope from Heaven a mission had
‘ To be his wife, and bear to him as well
‘ A girl, while Mary’s boy was yet a lad,
‘ So that Cordelia and Emanuel
‘ Should reunite the tie, which fate had torn,
‘ Between himself and Mary Haggerdorn.

LII.

‘ Her mission ended with her daughter’s birth.
‘ And then, without a pang of any kind,
‘ Jane Hope passed quietly away from earth.
‘ Is it not, Sir, astonishing to find
‘ Beliefs like this, which would provoke to mirth
‘ All men of even average strength of mind,
‘ In intellectual giants ! Search the range
‘ Of your experience, and confess ’tis strange !’

LIII.

‘ Strange, yes,’ said Edelrath, ‘ yet not so rare
‘ Are such reactions as they seem to you :
‘ Richelieu with kittens played, and the stars were
‘ By Wallenstein consulted : one or two
‘ Grains of his childhood every man, whate’er
‘ His character may be, keeps hid from view
‘ Safe at the core of it ; and now and then
‘ The power of childhood they assert again :

LIV.

'Of this, indeed, those men the world calls great
 'Furnish examples, which astonish us
 'Because such incongruities create
 'In characters that are conspicuous
 'The most impressive contrasts. To your late
 'Much-gifted friend, whose character was thus
 'Distinctly marked, his boyhood's love remained
 'An Eden unforgot and unregained ;

LV.

'And, like the Father of the Human Race,
 'He lived between two curses, turned almost
 'Into two blessings by the saving grace
 'Of Custom, which defrays the daily cost
 'Of human life,—the salt sweat of his face,
 'And the still-sweet remembrance of his lost
 'But unforgotten Paradise. These grand
 'Self-contradictions I can understand ;

LVI.

'But what I do not understand so well
 'Is that John Steel, who cherished, as you say,
 'Important projects for Emanuel—
 'A young man destined to become, some day,
 '(If he believed that deathbed oracle)
 'His daughter's husband,—should have found no
 way
 'To adopt, or by some other means to bring
 'The boy beneath his own paternal wing.'

LVII.

' O, as to that,' replied Herr Jonathan,
' It happens that I can enlighten you,
' And much more satisfactorily than
' About his other notions. For I too,
' Surprised that he should have laid down no plan
' In his own mind as proper to pursue
' About Emanuel, questioned him, and I
' Was forcibly impressed by his reply.

LVIII.

"Such plans," he said, "would be what he should
call
"Playing at Providence. Fate is not free
"On one side or the other side to fall;
"Sentiment stronger than all else must be,
"If sentiment be anything at all.
"Friend, I believe in miracles," said he,
"And I believe in chemistry as well;
"I from the alembic crave no miracle,

LIX.

"And Providence I ask not to prevent
"The copper plates on any ship of mine
"From being injured by the element
"That oxidizes copper. If, in fine,
"Emanuel can such a love content
"As, finding me unworthy its divine
"Accomplishment, the Heavenly Will, that made
"My heart its birthplace, to my life forbade,

LX.

“ Then, just as sure as you and I now are
“ Concerned about a youth we know not yet,
“ Soon as Love lights the signal, from afar
“ He will pursue it with a faith firm-set,
“ As did the Magian kings the Bethlem star :
“ If, on the other hand, his soul can get
“ From such a love no guidance, my control
“ Would but beguile him from his natural goal.

LXI.

“ As for the rest, I am not ignorant
“ Of aught that I as yet require to know
“ About Emanuel. For whate’er I want
“ To learn about him I have means ; and so,
“ Watchful, I wait the growth of this young plant.
“ Where God hath planted it, there let it grow !
“ All in good time. Well satisfied am I
“ The boy is in safe hands, and by and by—”

LXII.

‘ By and by, what—I never knew. For there,
‘ John Steel invariably would turn away
‘ With an abrupt and peremptory air,
‘ That said, more plainly than all words could say,
“ I mean to tell you nothing more. Forbear
“ To ask me further.” But I think you may
‘ Be certain (I, at least, have not a doubt)
‘ That well John Steel knew what he was about.

LXIII.

‘The affections of that man, Sir, were profound
‘As his abilities were vast. The extent
‘Of these in those its counterpart had found,
‘Each furnishing the other’s measurement;
‘As if you, by the mountain’s height, could sound
‘The valley’s depth. Upon mankind he spent
‘The treasures of his genius, on his child
‘The treasures of his golden heart were piled;

LXIV.

‘And only see what the results have been!
‘There, the wide influence of a natural king,
‘Here the sweet majesty of a natural queen!
‘And how Cordelia has in everything
‘Her father’s love requited! Sir, between
‘Ourselves, I think some strange foreshadowing
‘Of such requital prompted him to say
‘His daughter’s name should be Cordelia.

LXV.

‘I’ve seen the piece from which he took that name;
‘And, when the old king, weeping over her,
‘Upon the stage with his dead daughter came,
‘(You’ll laugh at me when I confess it, Sir,
‘But always it affects me just the same)
‘I felt obliged to leave the theatre.
‘I couldn’t stand it. John Steel’s happiness
‘To me so well explained King Lear’s distress!’

LXVI.

Here, with a long-drawn breath, Herr Jonathan
Puffed at his pipe ; but found that it was out,
Just like this Canto. Grunting, he began
To knock the ashes from it all about ;
And while its emptied bowl that worthy man
Replenished, Edelrath, who was no doubt
By all he had been hearing deeply stirred,
Mused with shut eyes, and uttered not a word.

CANTO III.

JOHN STEEL'S DAUGHTER.

I.

'YES,' resumed Eckermann, as soon as he
His pipe had filled. 'Cordelia to John Steel
'Was all a child can to a parent be :
'To think as *he* thought, as he felt to feel,
'An impulse so intuitive had she,
'That from her heart his own full heart's appeal
'Got, by anticipation, even ere yet
''Twas spoken, the response it craved to get.

II.

'For him, I often think when I recall
'The past, what consolation and delight
'It must have been to ease his soul of all
'Its inmost thoughts to one who, with the right
'To claim his trust, possessed such magical
'Endowment its outpourings to requite,
'By understanding them. His hopes betrayed,
'His faith unshaken,—all, her own she made !

III.

‘And ’tis thro’ having from her childhood known
‘The depth and grandeur of her father’s heart,
‘That into all the fibres of her own
‘The ideal of a love that stands apart
‘From every other with her growth has grown.
‘The common Cupid with his casual dart
‘Will never touch her. What she sees in love
‘Is life’s most sacred mission from above :

IV.

‘A mission to which few are called perchance,
‘And fewer still are chosen, to effect
‘The revelation and deliverance
‘Of a sublime evangel, whose elect
‘Evangelists each worldly circumstance
‘That contradicts its truth must needs reject.
‘But there’s no use in my attempting, Sir,
‘To probe so singular a character ;

V.

‘How should I know what passes in the high
‘Ethereal regions of which souls like hers
‘Are the inhabitants? Such regions lie
‘Beyond my reach, where Earth with Heaven con-
fers !
‘Yet, tho’ I cannot comprehend them, I
‘The more revere those wondrous characters
‘Whose lives bestow on all the human race
‘A higher dignity, a grander grace ;

VI.

'And in that girl I humbly recognise
'One of those rare surpassing souls whose glow
'Gladdens the world with beautiful surprise,
'Like great creative poets. Well I know
'That I, with all my business faculties,
'Shrewdness and common sense, am far below
'Such spirits, and can never hope to be
'Their equal. So sublime they seem to me!'

VII.

This language from the mouth of Eckermann,
Who seemed, so far as his appearance went,
The very last and most unlikely man
To set such value upon sentiment,
So startled Edelrath that he began
To doubt his ears; and his surprise found vent
In exclamations which elicited
From his strange host fresh snorts. 'Dear me,' he
said,

VIII.

'There's nothing wonderful in what I say.
'In this, Sir, as in everything, I go
'By my own common sense. America
'You never visited? Well, you must know
That in the great wild West there, far away
'Where the immense primæval forests grow,
'Vast tracts of savage territory lie,
'Whose occupiers are queer company;

IX.

‘ As savage as the soil is, are the men !
‘ Rough customers—a most forbidding lot
‘ All of them, as the Devil said, Sir, when
‘ He saw the Ten Commandments ; yet there’s not
‘ A man among them but can now and then,
‘ If there’s occasion for it, from a sot
‘ And ruffian, change himself into a stoic,
‘ Intrepid, patient, sober, and heroic :

X.

‘ We call them pioneers : Civilisation
‘ Sends them to search thro’ regions that ignore her
‘ For treasures she ignores, and their vocation
‘ Is, at all costs, to clear her way before her.
‘ Full credit be to them, say I ! Privation
‘ And peril is the lot of each explorer,
‘ And doubtful his reward. The Heroes they
‘ Of Muscles, be their motives what they may !

XI.

‘ But there are other kinds of heroes, ay,
‘ And higher ones ! and when a man I see
‘ With lofty brow and penetrative eye,
‘ Whose genius opens out for you and me
‘ Regions remote, and rugged, that defy
‘ The mind’s invasion, with what needs must be
‘ Obscurities more formidable far
‘ Than those of our primæval forests are,

XII.

' I recognise with a profound respect
 ' The Pioneer of Thought, who clears the way
 ' Onward and upward for man's intellect :
 ' These men I value most : the Heroes they
 ' Of Brains : and on mankind such men reflect
 ' More honour than mankind to them can pay.
 ' But, in the name of common sense, are we
 ' Nothing but brains and muscles? What would be

XIII.

' The athlete, better than a powerful beast,
 ' The *savant*, better than a thought-machine,
 ' But for the heart? the heart, that to the least
 ' Of its explorers opens what a mine
 ' Of mysteries, and provides, too, what a feast
 ' Of pleasures for its humblest owner ! Mine
 ' Has been, upon the whole, a pleasant life :
 ' I have a happy home, a worthy wife,

XIV.

' Children I love, good health, good appetite,
 ' I eat well, sleep well, and am well-to-do :
 ' If in these blessings I had no delight,
 ' A brute I should be, and an idiot too :
 ' But how could I enjoy them, were I quite
 ' Without that faculty, which gives the hue
 ' And tone to all? For 'tis the heart alone
 ' That gives to all things else their hue and tone.

XV.

' Well, but this happiness, which you may call
' Humdrum without offence (for what am I?
' A humdrum man !) has it exhausted all
' The wonderful and precious things that lie
' In Feeling's treasure-house ? Or can my small
' Experience measure the immensity
' Of those illimitable realms that rest
' By me untraversed in the Heart's Far West ?

XVI.

' No ! there, my common sense convinces me,
' Vast elevations more sublime than are
' The Rocky Mountains, and wide tracts, must be,
' Richer, more varied, and more fertile far,
' Than any earthly soil that's known to me ;
' There, doubtless, many an undiscovered star,
' And many a region, none yet penetrates,
' Feeling's predestined pioneer awaits ;

XVII.

' Ah, what awaits in turn the pioneer ?
' Easy to guess ! sufferings beyond the lot
' Of other mortals, struggles more severe,
' And victories by vaster efforts got !
' How should one know such souls when they appear ?
' I know, and pity those that know them not !
' As, by the brawny arm, or lofty brow,
' Heroes of Muscles, or of Brains, we know,

XVIII.

'So may these Heroes of the Heart be known
 'By other signs : I cannot name them all,
 'Nor are they to be named, but felt alone :
 'I feel them when I find them, and could fall
 'Upon my knees before them. There is one
 'Familiar name I know them by ; I call
 'That name Cordelia ; and I'd follow her
 'Blindfold across the world without demur !

XIX.

'Blindfold, without demur,—for if, some day,
 'She showed me not, and helped me not to see,
 'Something like Paradise Regained,—why, may
 'The Old Gen—' But there, whether it was that he
 Perceived that what he was about to say
 Would altogether more appropriate be
 To Paradise Lost, or whether it was merely
 That language failed to express his feelings clearly,

XX.

The worthy Jonathan behind a vast
 And many-coloured pocket-handkerchief
 Hid all his face, and blew a nasal blast,
 Which seemed at once to give him much relief.
 This tribute paid to sentiment, at last
 With more composure he went on, 'In brief
 'Cordelia is Cordelia. I was still
 'At Hamburg when her father died. His will,

XXI.

' And mine, recalled me to his daughter's side ;
' And then it was that from her lips I learned
' Her resolution forthwith to confide
' To Mary Müller's son what, I discerned
(' From all her language on this point implied)
' Were my lost friend's last wishes. He had
 yearned,
' I knew, for the arrival of that day
' Which came at last just as he passed away ;

XXII.

' The day, Sir, when Emanuel's education
' At Heidelberg was ended. Then it was
' John Steel had meant to make the revelation
' So long withheld. My poor friend's death, alas,
' Rendered impossible the slow gradation
' Of steps by which it would have come to pass
' Under his guiding hand, had he but lived
' To carry out the project he contrived :

XXIII.

' Cordelia's frank, straightforward character
' Spurned the precautions which to me seemed
 better
' Than none at all, and which I urged on her
' For prudence' sake : nor could I even get her
' The trial of Emanuel to defer
' Till she at least knew more of him : her letter
' Reached Europe, as she meant that it should do,
' By the same boat that bore its writer too :

XXIV.

' She might have written it from Hamburg, where
 ' With us she then was staying : but I guess
 ' She feared that, if Emanuel were aware
 ' That he was within reach of her address,
 ' That knowledge might precipitate the affair.
 ' Her wish was that his answer, no, or yes,
 ' To so deliberate an invocation
 ' Should not be made without deliberation.

XXV.

' " The experiment to which her hand she set
 ' " Was to decide her fate," she said, " and prove
 ' " Whether two persons who had never met
 ' " Could love each other with an ardent love,
 ' " Intenser than the senses can beget,
 ' " A rapt communion of two souls, above
 ' " The need and aid of sight and touch, those springs
 ' " Of passion that fan open Love's shut wings :

XXVI.

' " She stood upon the shore of Life's great sea,
 ' " And saw Love walking on the waves," she said ;
 ' " Love, with stretched hand, called to her, *Follow me !*
 ' " And follow him she would, nor fear to tread
 ' " That unsubstantial path. Such faith had she
 ' " In the sublime sustaining Power that led !"
 ' " But if," said I, " this singular faith of yours
 ' " Unshared should be ?" She answered, " Faith
 endures,

XXVII.

- “Shared, or unshared. From Love, for Love, my heart
 “Religiously received a sacred treasure ;
 “My mandate is to find its counterpart,
 “And not to place it save where in full measure
 “Its like is found. Guideless I do not start
 “On this great errand, which vouchsafes no leisure
 “To palter with its purpose. If, however,
 “The message I am given to deliver

XXVIII.

- “Is not received where 'tis addressed, be sure
 “My heart will keep what to my heart was given
 “In trust for Love, still safe, and whole, and pure,
 “Till Love recalls to its own source in Heaven
 “What earth rejected. Faith will still endure
 “Unshaken, though unshared. I shall have
 striven,
 “Faithful, as strove my father, to fulfil
 “Love's purpose here ; and, like my father, still

XXIX.

- “Must wait resigned till it is better known
 “Beyond.” “But, ah, the danger is,” said I,
 “Lest such a faith as yours be overthrown
 “Not by rejection, but by treachery !
 “What, if the heart to which you trust your own,
 “Should give you, in return for truth, a lie ?”
 ‘Scarce uttered was that warning, ere I would
 ‘Have instantly recalled it if I could ;

XXX.

' From head to foot Cordelia trembled. She
' Had turned death-white. Far braver than most
men
' I knew she was, but never did I see,
' And may Heaven grant I never see again,
' Such terror in a woman's face! I'm free
' To own that I could answer nothing, when
' She cried, "Hush! do not tempt me to believe
' "That this is possible! Can God deceive?"

XXXI.

' How could I answer that appeal, or make
' Objections to the faith that it implied?
' You might as well insist, for safety's sake,
' On getting the Four Gospels certified
' Before a magistrate empowered to take
' Evidence upon oath. I simply tried
' To unsay what I had said, and could have bitten
' My tongue off. So the letter, Sir, was written ;

XXXII.

' Written and sent! And what that letter said
' I cannot say. To me she did not care
' To show it. Naturally! But I read
' (Read, and good heavens, Sir, how it made me
stare!)
' The answer it from him elicited :
' Stiff, as I read that answer, all my hair
' Stood with a horror I can still recall.
' Twenty lines, and a postscript—that was all!

XXXIII.

' The twenty lines, in twenty thousand ways,
 ' Said twenty thousand times the same word, "yes!"
 ' Love's language may, as everybody says
 ' It is, be universal: but I guess
 ' As many dialects as the year has days,
 ' And more—as many as couples more or less
 ' In love, there be—that language must have got ;
 ' Each gibberish to those that speak it not !

XXXIV.

' This wonderful epistle, anyhow,
 ' Was not to my address ; and no offence
 ' Is to its writer meant when I avow
 ' That upon me its flowers of eloquence
 ' Made no impression. But I must bestow
 ' Full justice on his genius to condense
 ' *Multum in parvo*. For I'm bound to say
 ' His postscript fairly took my breath away.'

XXXV.

As Eckermann this observation made,
 Edelrath heaved a sigh so audible
 That, startled by it, the good merchant said,
 ' What is the matter? You appear unwell.
 ' And all this talk fatigues you, I'm afraid.
 ' I should have thought of that !' Upon the bell
 He laid his hand. ' At seven o'clock we dine.
 ' Meanwhile, a sandwich and a glass of wine !

XXXVI.

'Nay, do! A biscuit, then, at least, I trust?
 'What, is it really, absolutely no?
 'Well by a wave of the hand, Sir, you have just
 'Declined a biscuit with no more ado
 'Than that superb postscriptum (for I must
 'Call it superb) declined—by one or two
 'Strokes of the pen—and with as cool an air—
 'The fortune of our greatest *millionnaire*!

XXXVII.

'Ah, yes, indeed!' continued Eckermann
 Attracted by, and misinterpreting,
 The grief of Edelrath (who here began
 With a despairing groan his hands to wring)
 "'Tis, as you say, incredible! I can,
 'No more than you, account for such a thing,
 'Nor reconcile myself to it at all.
 'I try to do so, but I never shall!

XXXVIII.

'And more than this! Refuse the wealth immense
 'She offered him,—well, that might pass; but no,
 'Nothing by halves the fine indifference
 'Of our young prince, Sir, is content to do!
 'And he invites Cordelia to dispense
 'With her whole fortune, for her own self too,
 'Just as he might have said, "My dear Miss Steel,
 '"Let me relieve you of your shawl! you'll feel

XXXIX.

“ Better without it, ’tis so hot to-day ! ”
‘ But what is harder still to be believed,
‘ Is the delighted, the enraptured, way
‘ In which Cordelia, for her part, received
‘ This cool proposal. Nothing I could say
‘ To change her mind, the least success achieved ;
‘ She said that this was what most proved how well
‘ Her rede was riddled by Emanuel.

XL.

‘ You may conceive, Sir, my embarrassment.
‘ My guardianship is purely nominal ;
‘ This sacrifice of fortune to prevent,
‘ Steel’s will had given me no power at all ;
‘ And yet how could I cheerfully consent
‘ To see the child I loved and cherished fall,
‘ Thro’ a capricious boy’s infatuation,
‘ From boundless wealth to absolute privation ?

XLI.

‘ But ’tis impossible in every case
‘ To struggle with the sort of women who
‘ Never say “ must ’ or “ shall,” Sir ! They replace
‘ Commonplace self-assertions, such as “ do ”
‘ And “ don’t,” by simply smiling in your face,
‘ And seeming not to understand what you
‘ Repeat with pains so idly spent about it,
‘ That you yourself at last begin to doubt it ;

XLII.

' And forthwith that unconquerable smile
' Gets round you ; and, before you quite know how,
' You find yourself applauding what erewhile
' You disapproved. That was my case, I know ;
' And I passed over, in the usual style
' Of converts, with an irrepressible glow
' Of changed conviction, to the other side.
' You wonder ? Yes, but I was sorely tried,

XLIII.

' And there is one fact that contributed
' To my conversion more than all the rest ;
' To admit it with reluctance I was led,
' And to withstand it long I did my best ;
' But it is certain all Cordelia said,
' In furtherance of Emanuel's request,
' Would by the father she so dearly loved
' (Strange as that fact may seem) have been approved.

XLIV.

' Yet what a bitter thing it was, to see
' That noble fortune all dispersed and gone !
' A fortune, Sir, that was indeed to me
' An endless joy and wonder ! Not alone
' Because I knew its vast extent to be
' Unequalled, but because there was not one
' Of its details I did not know by heart.
' That fortune was to me a work of art ;

XLV.

‘ A work of art and genius ! I had watched
‘ The growth of it, and knew how it was made.
‘ As precious as the masterpiece unmatched
‘ Of some surpassing artist, lately dead,
‘ Is to the connoisseur who was attached
‘ To the dead master, and had often stayed
‘ Beside him while beneath his hand it grew,
‘ To me that fortune was. Its worth I knew ;

XLVI.

‘ And never, I assure you, did I pass
‘ A night as wretched as the night when I
‘ Completed what appeared to me, alas,
‘ Much like the first act of the tragedy
‘ To which Cordelia owes her name. It was
‘ With heavy heart, and eyes by no means dry,
‘ I handed her, for her self-spoliation,
‘ The deed I had devised of a donation,

XLVII.

‘ Of which—I shall have more to say anon !
‘ It was dispatched about six weeks ago
‘ To the United States ; and everyone
‘ Of its provisions will be soon, I know,
‘ In course of execution. When ’twas done,
‘ “ And now,” said I, “ what are you going to do
‘ “ Without your fairy gold, my Fairy Queen ?
‘ “ One has to live, you know ! at least I mean,

XLVIII.

‘“Life being given, one must keep it going
 ‘“Somehow or other.” “Certainly,” said she,
 ‘“That’s all provided for.” And, with a knowing
 ‘Curtsey and an arch smile, she handed me
 ‘A little slip of printed paper, showing
 ‘Where she had marked it. Sir, there seemed to be
 ‘No end to the surprises, I may say,
 ‘That I was doomed to undergo that day ;

XLIX.

‘Her printed slip was an advertisement
 ‘Which I myself had put into the press,
 ‘Not long before this unforeseen event,
 ‘Of my requirement of a governess
 ‘Well recommended, and both competent
 ‘And willing (for board, lodging, all but dress,
 ‘Provided, and a hundred pounds a year)
 ‘To teach my daughters—you have seen them here,

L.

‘One eight, the other ten. “What! you, a Queen,
 ‘“A Princess Born!” I cried. “Good heavens,
 reflect!
 ‘“What are you doing? Do you really mean
 ‘“To tell me you’ve the patience to correct
 ‘“Themes, on the important difference between
 ‘“Virtue and vice, by children I suspect
 ‘“Of generally spelling with two p’s
 ‘“The word papa? “And why not, if you please?”

LI.

‘ Replied Cordelia. “ Mind what you are at,
 ‘ “ Or I shall raise my terms, and ask you, Sir,
 ‘ “ Fifty pounds more *per annum*.” “ As to that,
 ‘ “ Five hundred, if you will,” I cried to her,
 ‘ “ A thousand ! anything ? no matter what ! ”
 ‘ “ Bah ! no false bargains ! As for character,
 ‘ “ No reference is needed,” she went on,
 ‘ “ And, for acquirements, I have every one

LII.

‘ “ That this, your own advertisement demands ;
 ‘ “ The terms that here are specified apply
 ‘ “ To any governess who understands
 ‘ “ How to teach history, geography,
 ‘ “ French, English, music. Here, then, to your hands
 ‘ “ Is just the person you require, for I
 ‘ “ Can do all this. Painting and singing, too,
 ‘ “ I’m willing to teach gratis. What say *you* ? ”

LIII.

‘ I could have gathered to my own that brave
 ‘ And noble heart, to teach mine how to beat
 ‘ More manfully ! But as she only gave
 ‘ To my embrace (with such a smile ! so sweet,
 ‘ And so bewitchingly half-arch, half-grave !)
 ‘ Her dainty finger tips, a kiss discreet
 ‘ I placed upon them ; and, well pleased to yield
 ‘ All her conditions, thus the bargain sealed.

LIV.

‘ But there was no occasion to install
‘ That dear new governess in her command ;
‘ She had so long been governing us all,
‘ I might have capped the phrase by Talleyrand
‘ For Louis the Eighteenth, on the recall
‘ Of the French Bourbons, so adroitly planned ;
‘ Nothing was changed here, all was as before ;
‘ There was not even a governess the more !

LV.

‘ A few days after this, I chanced to hear,
‘ From persons there who correspond with me,
‘ That our young friend had finished his career
‘ At Heidelberg, and taken his degree,
‘ And gone away, with a young English peer,
‘ To Switzerland, where I was told that we
‘ Most probably should find him travelling still
‘ With his companion, Lord Glenaveril.

LVI.

‘ To Switzerland forthwith we took our way ;
‘ And the sole stipulation on my side,
‘ (With which, to my relief, Cordelia
‘ Immediately and cheerfully complied)
‘ Was that she should on no account betray
‘ Her name to her betrothed till time had tried,
‘ By, at the least, some weeks of intercourse,
‘ Her first impressions, whatsoe’er their force.

LVII.

' I felt that, if I had too easily
 ' Sanctioned the sacrifice of that great prize,
' Cordelia's fortune, I was bound to be
 ' All the more careful not to jeopardize,
' So far as this depended still on me,
 ' Her peace of heart. A land of no great size
' Is Switzerland, and regulated all,
' From an hotel-book to a waterfall,

LVIII.

' For the convenience of the traveller ;
 ' I knew 'twould not be difficult to find
' In such a well-conducted country, Sir,
 ' The man we were in search of. Chance was kind,
' However, and our first appeal to her
 ' Conducted us at once, with undesigned
' Selection, to the very same hotel,
' At Chamouni, where lodged Emanuel ;

LIX.

' Chance, in the person of the waiter, too,
 ' That served our breakfast, told us who he was,
' By calling out to a young man there, who
 ' Was seated near, and whom he had to pass,
' " My lord Glenaveril wants his keys of you,
 ' " Herr Müller." He got up ; and in a glass
' Close by, his image, with observant eyes,
' I watched without betraying my surprise.

LX.

'The face there quite surpassed in every way
'The notion I had formed of it. I knew
'Already by report, before that day,
'Emanuel was well-made, good-looking too,
'Studious, and thoughtful, and, I had heard say,
'Somewhat reserved in manner. And 'tis true
'All these he seemed to be. But how much more
'That I had had no notion of before !

LXI.

'What would *you* take him for, if unaware
'Of all we know of him? Emanuel
'Is a poor student,—name and title, Herr
'Müller. That's all. And that's all very well,
'But, Sir, I say, Emanuel has an air,
'A something—how describe it? Truth to tell,
'It seems scarce credible that he and I,
'By birth at least, are equals. Tell me why !'

LXII.

Edelrath did not answer, but he cast
Upon the worthy merchant a sly glance
Half flattered, half satiric. 'All this passed,'
Herr Eckermann, with glowing countenance,
Continued, not observing it, 'so fast
'That we had barely time to look askance
'At one another. Upon my good dame,
'And me, and all, the impression was the same ;

LXIII.

' But 'twas Cordelia that you should have seen !
 ' That moment so transfigured her that I,
 ' Tho' long familiar with her face and mien,
 ' Felt as if then she stood before mine eye
 ' For the first time, and less like a young queen
 ' Than a young goddess just about to fly.
 ' And yet her manner, after this, was all
 ' Calmer if possible than usual ;

LXIV.

' Only, it unmistakably displayed
 ' The quiet proud serenity of one
 ' Who, bravely, on behalf of some gainsaid
 ' And long contested truth, stood out alone,
 ' When unexpected proof of it has made
 ' By all acknowledged what till then by none
 ' Had been believed. I whispered to her, " Yes,
 ' " Cordelia, you were right, I must confess,

LXV.

" And I, who doubted your presentiments,
 " " Have been an ass ! But you have second-sight !
 " " What I've now seen such certainty presents,
 " " My doubts were wrong, and your convictions
 right,
 " " That I, to make amends at all events,
 " " Release you from your pledges ; I am quite
 " " Prepared to go and find him, and, indeed,
 " " To tell him all at once." " There is no need,"

LXVI.

'She answered in her calmly-confident way.

' "He recognized me, and will come unsought ;

' "I know he will come back to us to-day."

'And back he came, that's true ! But how, Sir ?

Brought

'Upon the wretched litter, where he lay

'A bleeding cripple, to the bed I fought

'My way to find, across a cackling crowd

'That round about it gaped and gossiped loud !

LXVII.

'And then, to have to purchase the possession

'Of that poor piece of life, scarce living now,

'By tricks and subterfuges in succession !

'To watch the dubious doctor's ominous brow

'With fainting hope, and nurse the long progression

'Towards recovery, so uncertain, slow

'And painful ! If Emanuel lives to-day,

'He owes his life, Sir, to Cordelia !

LXVIII.

'Long while he lay unconscious. Self-possessed,

'And only very pale and still, was she.

'She never left his side for food or rest,

'And always seemed instinctively to be

'Aware of what he needed, what was best

'To do for him, and how to do it. He

'Opened at last his eyes on her, and low

'He whispered gazing at her, "Do not go !"

LXIX.

' Poor boy ! He fancied he was dreaming yet,
 ' And was reluctant from his dream to wake.
 ' Little by little he began to get
 ' Stronger, and seemed, at intervals, to take
 ' In the new faces that his gaze now met
 ' A puzzled interest. Often would he make
 ' Faint efforts to recall what had occurred,
 ' And, sighing, fail. His memory still was blurred.

LXX.

' He asked Cordelia o'er and o'er to tell
 ' Things told before, and how it was he came
 ' To be with strangers who were friends as well ;
 ' And everything surprised him ; his own name
 ' The most of all. In fact, Emanuel
 ' Seemed doubtful if he were himself the same,
 ' Where all things else had undergone such change,
 ' So jarred was his self-consciousness ! 'Tis strange !

LXXI.

' As for that letter he had written to
 ' Cordelia, when she mentioned it, he vowed
 ' It had been burned by Michael Angelo
 ' In the Last Judgment. Then, Sir, when she
 showed
 ' The letter to him, it was worse. " Just so !
 ' " 'Tis as I told you. Look ! " he cried aloud,
 ' " That's not a letter. See what wings it hath !
 ' " 'Tis the bird Phœnix, caught by Edelrath,

LXXII.

- “ And burned by Michael Angelo, yet there
“ ’Tis still alive, as well I knew ’twould be !
“ Ah, let it fly back to the forest, where
“ I found it first beneath an old elm-tree !
“ Edelrath caught it by a Samian snare,
“ Exclaiming, *Two and two make five !* You see
“ That was a talisman. But I believe
“ The bird escaped, and in a witch’s sieve

LXXIII.

- “ Sailed safe across the sea before he found
“ His matches, stolen by some Elfin thief ;
“ And then, it lost its way, and wandered round
“ The world, until it reached the Sioux Chief ;
“ He, the Swift Lizard, had just captive bound
“ The Moonwhite Maiden ; and ’tis my belief
“ That you are she ; my bird, for your release,
“ Lighted the Lizard’s calumet of peace.

LXXIV.

- “ Now to King David we must tell all this,
“ And he, perhaps, will make a psalm of it.
“ Ah, did you ever hear those psalms of his ?
“ There are words in them that appear to fit
“ All that has ever happened. But it is
“ A pity such fine poems should be writ
“ All in Chinese. Chinese ? No, no, that’s wrong !
“ That comes from China, and it is not strong,

LXXV.

- “It would not do! I had forgotten that!
 “’Tis all in cups and saucers, brittle ware!
 “As easily broken as that luckless hat
 “Of Edelrath’s, which brought on all this care
 “And trouble, when it tumbled off. That’s what
 “Was the beginning of it all, I swear!
 “Had they been made of china, well I know
 “The Psalms would have been broken long ago!

LXXVI.

- “Broken as Marietta’s needle was,
 “Broken like—ah, where are we? Where is he?
 “All broken! broken! broken!” So, alas,
 ‘He wandered on, quite incoherently,
 ‘For days and weeks together, and would pass
 ‘In his wild talk out of what seemed to be
 ‘One dream into another. He appeared
 ‘Not to remember who he was. I feared

LXXVII.

- His brain was permanently injured, Sir.
 ‘Cordelia was the only one, in fact,
 ‘Who never once lost hope; and he to her
 ‘Clung like a child. With what a marvellous tact
 ‘She tended him! As soon as he could stir,
 ‘Hoping that change of air might counteract
 ‘The symptoms I have just described to you,
 ‘We thought it best to try what that could do;

LXXVIII.

'And hither by slow stages we conveyed
'Our wounded hero. But, to my despair,
'His convalescence still no progress made,
'And months went by before Cordelia's care
'Of her poor patient was at last repaid
'By his improved condition. I declare
'What brought about this welcome change was due
'Mainly to his intense regard for you.

LXXIX.

'Preoccupied his mind had long appeared
'(On your account, as it has since turned out)
'By some great trouble, and when first he heard
'That, since that fatal accident, about
'Four months had passed, I more than ever feared
'The effect of this discovery, which no doubt
'Was startling. Like a wounded animal,
'He moaned, and beat his head against the wall,

LXXX.

'And he, at any risk and any cost,
'Must write to you immediately, he said.
'That was impossible. We were almost
'At our wits' end to calm him. We essayed
'To assure him, Sir, that by the earliest post
'We would not fail to write to you instead.
'That only made him worse, and threw him quite
'Into a raging fever. None must write

LXXXI.

‘ Except himself, and write he must, he cried,
‘ Without delay. We promised him (and by
‘ That promise he at last was pacified)
‘ That in three days, if he till then would try
‘ To nurse his strength, he should not be denied
‘ The means to write to you. With a deep sigh
‘ He closed his eyes, and fell asleep at length.
‘ These paroxysms had worn out his strength.

LXXXII.

‘ The third day after this he was so weak,
‘ We thought him sinking fast ; and I, for one,
‘ Was equally afraid to keep or break
‘ The promise given him. By the aid alone
‘ Of stimulants, though he could scarcely speak,
‘ He wrote you a few lines. When they were done,
‘ He sealed them up himself ; then swooned away.
‘ Yet was it from that moment, strange to say,

LXXXIII.

‘ That he began to mend. ’Twas daily then
‘ He wrote to you, and most impatiently
‘ Waited the answer to his letters. When
‘ However, weeks, months, passed without reply,
‘ He fell into that feverish state again
‘ From which your presence here will, by and by
‘ I trust, relieve him. But Emanuel
‘ Is still, believe me, very far from well.’

LXXXIV.

As this remark he made, Herr Jonathan
Assumed a gravely confidential mien.
'You ought to know it,' he again began,
'Even eyes less exercised than mine have been
'Could scarcely fail, in watching that young man,
'To see there's some great trouble still between
'His memory and his mind, some unrevealed
'Source of distress he tries to keep concealed.

LXXXV.

'I sometimes think that it perhaps may be
'Connected with his poor friend's dreadful fate ;
'For it is singularly strange that he
'Has never once, altho' so intimate
'With all of us, (and, if reserved to me,
'Still to Cordelia, at any rate,
'Eager to pour his thoughts out in profusion)
'Made to Glenaveril's fate the least allusion ;

LXXXVI.

'Nay, he has never once spontaneously
'Mentioned the name of Lord Glenaveril ;
'And in our intercourse with him, we try
'Never to mention it ourselves. It still
'Seems to disturb his mind profoundly. I
'Heard him pronounce your name, when he was ill,
'And raving, and Cordelia's, and, what is
'Most strange, his own : never that friend's of his !

XCIII.

He in that moment would have torn in two
The stifling web that round a truth so dear
Fatality had woven, but that he knew
The least imprudent word might, with it, tear
To fragments the one solitary clue
Which from the labyrinth, whose enclosure drear
Was round him clasped, still offered the best chance
Of his Glenaveril's deliverance ;

XCIV.

So he stood silent. For he dared not speak.
Only a few soft tears, unwitnessed, stole
Down the worn channels of his wrinkled cheek ;
And they were silent offerings to the soul
Of her who had entrusted to his weak
But loving hands, for guidance to its goal,
The pure young spirit whose innocent sufferings
Had thus enriched the radiance of its wings.



CANTO IV.

UTOPIA.

I.

EDEL RATH from his pious ecstasy
Was startled by the crystal clink and clatter
Of glasses, carried most unsteadily
By Eckermann upon a silver platter.
It was that good man's custom to apply,
When anything was with himself the matter,
One remedy ; to which his thoughts reverted
On seeing how his guest was disconcerted ;

II.

To fetch it he had slipped unseen away,
And now returned, breathless, and overcome
By trying to maintain, upon the tray
His two hands grasped, an equilibrium
'Twixt bottle, glasses, plates in piled array,
And salted viands heaped around a dome
Of cavernous cheese. At all which things he glanced
Anxiously, as in zigzags he advanced,

III.

Slow-footed, like a Juggler at a Fair,
 Who poises on his nose, with bandaged eyes,
 A peacock's feather. 'There!' he grunted, 'there!'
 As down he set them safe. 'That port's a prize.
 'Eighteen Fifteen its date is, I can swear!
 'I got it from a palace of the Paez
 'Myself, at Lisbon. Cases by the score
 'Of this grand wine were piled there on the floor,

IV.

'And the great house had fall'n into decay,
 'Like the great family itself; because,
 'Although the Paez were once, Sir, in their day
 'A wealthy clan, by the late liberal laws
 'Of Portugal, which have contrived a way
 'Of subdividing down to the last straws
 'All Portuguese estates, some fifteen heirs
 'In the Paez Property hold equal shares,

V.

'And all, of course, are paupers. And for this
 'Destruction, which is going forward yet,
 'Of its old families, no creature is
 'In all that country better off, I'll bet!
 'What wonder that Old Europe goes amiss,
 'When any catchword's able to upset
 'Its equilibrium? No nearer gets
 'Old Age to Youth by turning somersets!

VI.

'I've been in many countries, and in all
 'Have noticed, Sir, that the most asinine
 'Of asses is the ass that people call
 'Enlightened Progress. Try this noble wine!
 'The old nobility of Portugal
 'That glass contains, still pure, with all its fine
 'And generous strength. Do you remember, Sir,
 'The words of Portugal's great minister,

VII.

'After the earthquake? Well, as Pombal said
 'During the scare of Seventeen Fifty Five,
 '"Now that we've piously interred our dead,
 '"Let us look after those who are alive?"'
 Edelrath sorrowfully shook his head,
 And, feeling his embarrassments revive,
 'The saddest duty was the first,' sighed he,
 'But the most difficult the last will be!'

VIII.

'And therefore we,' said Eckermann, 'had best
 'Begin it now as soon as possible.'
 'Have you discussed this subject,' said his guest,
 'With—' There he stopped. The name, Emanuel,
 Stuck in his throat. Then, having paused in quest
 Of some expression that might serve as well,
 'With our young friend?' he faltered. 'Bless me, no!'
 Replied the merchant, 'that would never do.

IX.

'No man will ever learn, Sir, on dry land
 'By talking of the water, how to swim;
 'To push him in is all the friendliest hand
 'Can do for him.' 'And this is what for him
 'You mean to do, then, do I understand?'
 Said Edelrath. 'Such help seems rather grim.'
 'No,' said his host, 'Twere crueller, I think,
 'To keep the poor boy shivering on the brink.'

X.

'And if he drowns?' 'At twenty years of age
 'Nobody drowns, nor yet at forty!' 'Friend!'
 Said Edelrath, 'what is it you engage
 'My hand to help? and how do you intend
 'To bring our novice safe thro' the first stage
 'Of such a lesson? I nor see your end,
 'Nor guess your means. Be good enough to state
 'What are the projects that you meditate.'

XI.

'If,' said the merchant, 'I had more than one,
 'All would be worthless. But the worst's the best
 'When there's no other, for 'tis this or none.'
 'And may I learn,' said Edelrath, oppressed
 By his determination to have done
 With these perplexing confidences, lest
 He should betray the truth, 'this excellent
 'Bad project upon which your mind is bent?'

XII.

‘Of course!’ replied Herr Jonathan, ‘your aid
 ‘Is indispensable to its success,
 ‘Of which, indeed, I’m not the least afraid,
 ‘If you’ll but promise to support it.’ ‘Yes,
 ‘I promise, but on one condition,’ said
 Herr Edelrath. ‘Then that’s enough! I guess
 ‘What your condition is; and, for my part,
 ‘Sir, I agree to it with all my heart.’

XIII.

‘In that case I’ve no need to mention it.’
 ‘None. I will mention it myself; and, Sir,
 ‘It is a fair condition and a fit;
 ‘Namely, that in its aim, its character,
 ‘And its details, the project I submit
 ‘Be one in which your judgment can concur.’
 Edelrath bowed, with a sedate assent;
 ‘When a man has,’ he said, ‘the sentiment

XIV.

‘Of duty in himself, Sir, he translates
 ‘Intuitively, as by divination,
 ‘What to another’s conduct it dictates.’
 ‘That is,’ said Eckermann, ‘an intimation
 ‘That you and I, in what associates
 ‘Our duty with Emanuel’s situation,
 ‘Shall understand each other perfectly.
 ‘I will explain my project by and by;

XV.

‘But let us first impartially review
‘The case before us, ere we deal with it.
‘Emanuel, to live, must now pursue
‘Some calling. For what calling is he fit?
‘What can he do? What has he learned to do?
‘That’s the first question I have to submit.
‘Theology has been his study. Good!
‘How will it help him to a livelihood?’

XVI.

Herr Jonathan here blew his nose again :
And, as Herr Edelrath made no reply,
After a pause he thus continued, ‘When
‘It happens that the inn, Sir, can supply
‘Only one bed, for which a hundred men
‘Are applicants, it is a certainty,
‘If for one man the bed be not too wide,
‘That ninety-nine of them must sleep outside ;

XVII.

‘But what are all our Public Services?
‘Inns that have one bed only. And that bed,
‘We all know what a narrow one it is!
‘Yet daily, hoping there to lay their head,
‘From Europe’s hundred universities
‘Come troops of travellers ; and our sons are bred
‘And trained, and crammed, and educated yet
‘To live by what scarce one of them can get.

XVIII.

‘Yes, Sir, that’s it! We teach them Latin, Greek,
‘Ologies, Onomies, and Heaven knows what!
‘We teach them how to write, and how to speak,
‘And how to fuss about, and fumble at,
‘What no one wants. But we forget to eke
‘The course out by one science, Sir, and that
‘Is how to die of hunger by and by.
‘Emanuel has learnt theology :

XIX.

‘How is he now to live by it?’ ‘Nay, nay,
Cried Edelrath, well satisfied to see
Theology from the order of the day
At once excluded. ‘You may reckon me
‘As one already quite of your own way
‘Of thinking on that question. There can be
‘No use in proving what is understood ;
‘Theology is not a livelihood.’

XX.

‘Good!’ said Herr Jonathan, and waved his hand.
‘Of the Three Pillars of the State—the Priest,
‘The Soldier, and the Tiller of the Land,
‘There goes the first! This simplifies at least
‘The question that we have to deal with, and
‘As for the second—’ ‘Pass it!’ with increased
Impatience, cried his guest. ‘A soldier? pooh!
‘Absurd! impossible!’ ‘Well, there go two!’

XXI.

Rejoined Herr Jonathan. 'Two pillars gone
 'Out of the three; and, since there are not four—'
 'Yes,' interrupted Edelrath, 'not one
 'Will do, of course! This much was plain before,
 'So to your project pray at once pass on.'
 'Pass?' cried the merchant, 'But there's nothing
 more
 'To pass to! We're arrived, you understand.'
 'Arrived at what?' 'The Tiller of the Land.'

XXII.

'But, Sir,' gasped Edelrath, 'to cultivate
 'The land, a man must first, I apprehend,
 'Some land possess. And where's the land? I wait
 'With curiosity to learn, my friend,
 'Where you have found the farm, and at what rate
 'Of interest any bank you know will lend
 'Without security the capital
 'With which to farm it, be it ne'er so small!'

XXIII.

Then, visibly dilating with the pride
 Of one who has successfully designed
 Some great surprise, Herr Jonathan replied,
 'A little farm, Sir? Nothing of the kind!
 'No, Sir! a princely property, as wide
 'And broad as any property you'll find
 'In England, Hungary, or Austria,
 'That's what I mean! And now what do you say?'

XXIV.

‘I say,’ said Edelrath, ‘and mean it too,
 ‘That you will most obligingly complete
 ‘My knowledge of geography, if you
 ‘Can point me out the country (I repeat
 ‘’Twill be the kindest thing that you can do,
 ‘And, if it be a secret, I’m discreet)
 ‘Where such a property is to be got
 ‘By asking for it.’ ‘Certainly, why not?’

XXV.

Laughed Eckermann. ‘And ’tis allowed to be
 ‘The richest country in the world. We call
 ‘That country, Sir, the Future.’ ‘Ah, I see!
 ‘A rather distant country!’ ‘Not at all!
 ‘’Tis but a step to get to it. Dear me,
 ‘You thought to push me, did you, to the wall?
 ‘No, no, Sir! that is more than any man
 ‘Has ever done to Brother Jonathan!

XXVI.

‘And, Sir, the time is come to tell you now
 ‘That, when I had Cordelia’s ships in charge
 ‘To burn for her, I managed, you must know,
 ‘To keep one plank of safety. ’Tis not large,
 ‘But it is large enough, Sir, anyhow,
 ‘For us to fashion out of it a barge
 ‘That, if well managed, will suffice to bear
 ‘Safe to the Promised Land our shipwrecked pair.

XXVII.

‘ In drawing up, Sir, for Cordelia
‘ The Deed of Transfer which is past recall,
‘ I had before mine eyes, as I may say,
‘ The example of that gallant General
‘ Who, when he saw his own troops giving way,
‘ Into the enemy’s ranks, before them all,
‘ His baton flung; and, followed by his men,
‘ Spurred where it fell, to fetch it back again.

XXVIII.

‘ Cordelia’s fortune, you must understand,
‘ Is now invested, every cent, in buying
Enormous tracts of waste but fertile land,
‘ By Congress sold upon the far-outlying
‘ And sparsely-peopled frontiers that expand
‘ Westward, beneath the wings of the wide-flying
‘ American Eagle; and in founding there
‘ A Colony like nothing known elsewhere,

XXIX.

‘ My own conception,—of which more anon!
‘ Meanwhile, Sir, the Trustees of this Dotation
‘ Have carefully been chosen, every one.
‘ Here, then, the Founders of a Future Nation
‘ May all start fair. The soil requires alone
‘ For its remunerative cultivation
‘ Patience, Sobriety, and Honesty,
‘ Virtues which Germany can best supply:

XXX.

' To every German settler the Trustees
 ' Of the Concession, free of rent, will let
 ' On lease, as many acres, out of these
 ' Waste lands whereon our Settlement is set,
 ' As he (with his relations, if they please
 ' To form a little Company,) can get
 ' In five years' time completely cleaned and ploughed :
 ' No sort of wage-paid labour is allowed :

XXXI.

' The Board of Management to each will give
 ' Free passage first of all, then tools, and seed,
 ' And household furniture : but each must drive
 ' His own plough, build his own house : as the need
 ' Arises later, each, too, will receive
 ' Machinery, and everything indeed
 ' That he requires, on credit, from the Board :
 ' But money, never. There, Sir ! in a word,

XXXII.

' That's how I mean to teach folks how to swim !
 ' " But if a man's unteachable, then what
 ' " Are we to do," you ask ? Get rid of him !
 ' As Nature does. The Board looks into that.
 ' After five years—his land is in good trim,
 ' The Inspector to the Board reports ? Thereat,
 ' The man's lease is renewed for five years more,
 ' Rent free, on the same footing as before :

XXXIII.

‘Or else, the Board then finds, let us suppose,
 ‘The land’s neglected? Easy, Sir, to guess
 ‘That, in that case, the man was one of those
 ‘Who, from stupidity or laziness,
 ‘Would rather drown than swim: and out he goes!
 ‘The Board resumes the land: anon, some less
 ‘Neglectful farmer takes the lost one’s place,
 ‘And cultivation thus proceeds apace.

XXXIV.

‘The idle and the unintelligent
 ‘Are not allowed to linger on the land
 ‘In permanent indebtedness, but sent
 ‘About their business. Thus, you understand,
 ‘Due means have been provided to prevent
 ‘A pauper peasantry, upon one hand,
 ‘And, on the other, the accumulation
 ‘Of wealth unearned. In this Confederation

XXXV.

‘Of Individual Labour, every man
 ‘Shall have full freedom to increase his store,
 ‘And grow as rich and prosperous as he can:
 ‘And none shall be allowed, Sir, to grow poor.
 ‘Our system thus proceeds on Nature’s plan:
 ‘The weak go to the wall, and to the door
 ‘The idle. Testamentary Bequest
 ‘Will be, however free, like all the rest:

XXXVI.

' No man toils only for himself : work done
' For others is the best : man's present state
' Is nourished by his future : every one
' Who has achieved would fain perpetuate
' The fruits of his achievement, and in none
' Is that wish stronger than the good and great :
' And therefore each may to his children leave
' All he himself was able to achieve :

XXXVII.

' But their retention of it will depend
' On their capacity, alone : they may
' By their own thrift and industry extend,
' Or lose by their own idleness, what they
' Have thus inherited. The Board will send,
' Every five years, Inspectors ; who away
' From one will take, and to another give,
' The land on which he can, or cannot, live.

XXXVIII.

' Equality, which will not coëxist
' With freedom, in our programme has no place.
' All may acquire what will by some be missed,
' By others won : but free shall be the race,
' As fair the start : no mill shall get more grist
' Than it can grind, nor less : in every case
' Justice shall to the land by every one
' Be perfectly and punctually done :

XXXIX.

'The man who fails his land to cultivate,
 'His land shall lose : and no one, man or clan,
 'Keeping the land in an impoverished state,
 'Shall linger on it. Nature's Gift to Man,
 'Which blesses all men who appreciate
 'The use of it, our laws assert there can,
 'And shall, be no political excuse
 'For ruining by man's prolonged misuse :

XL.

'And be the Settlers upon this Plantation
 'Two, or two thousand, at the first, they'll be
 'The living nucleus of a Great New Nation,
 'Founded upon a Great New Theory
 'Under the title—' There, in hesitation,
 Eckermann for the first time paused, as he
 Musingly added, 'Never mind the name !
 'Call it whate'er you please. The fact's the same.'

XLI.

'Why not,' suggested Father Edelrath,
 'Call it, at once, Utopia ?' 'As you will !'
 Rejoined Herr Jonathan. 'Utopia hath
 'At all times been, and so it must be still,
 'The world's name for each new untrodden path
 'Into the future. 'Twas the name, until
 'To these new ways the world accustomed was,
 'Of Electricity, and Steam, and Gas.

XLII.

' Utopia, Sir, will have a President.
 ' The first Utopian President will be
 ' The earliest settler on the vast extent
 ' Of those prolific territories he,
 ' Or his successors in the government,
 ' Will rule hereafter with a rule, tho' free,
 ' Yet just as firm as any king's on earth.
 ' From the first anniversary of the birth

XLIII.

' Of the Utopian Confederation
 ' Its Presidents will be elected. Now,
 ' The leader of the earliest emigration
 ' Is indicated, and his name we know ;
 ' In short, here lies Emanuel's vocation !
 ' Better than priest, or soldier, you'll allow ?
 ' Tho', since with Nature he must fight, and preach
 ' Labour's new gospel, 'tis akin to each.

XLIV.

' First President, and President for life,
 ' By choice of suffrage, and by right of date !
 ' If, aided, as he will be, by his wife
 ' And those I can with him associate
 ' On equal terms, Emanuel, in a strife
 ' With circumstance by no means desperate,
 ' Is not victorious—if he does not eat
 ' The bread he makes himself, and find it sweet—

XLV.

‘ If game and venison from his own estate
‘ Deck not his board, and poultry from his own
‘ Farmyard—if unreplenished be his plate
‘ With mutton from the pastures he hath grown —
‘ If his fresh dairies be not filled with great
‘ Fat cheeses, and his orchards bending down
‘ With rosy apples, and his gardens glowing
‘ With simple flowers and fruits of his own sowing—

XLVI.

‘ If, having been Utopia’s earliest
‘ Settler, and her first President thereby,
‘ He is not re-elected, as the best
‘ Of her community, to hold that high
‘ Position still in trust for all the rest—
‘ And if thenceforward, universally
‘ Beloved and honoured, both his wife and he
‘ Utopia’s popular sovereigns fail to be—

XLVII.

‘ If, when this couple travel up and down
‘ Their smiling realms, where idleness, distress,
‘ And indigence, and misery, are unknown,
‘ They do not find, Sir, in the happiness
‘ Of others a delight that’s all their own—
‘ Ay! if, in that republic, theirs be less
‘ Than rule the royallest that’s known to men,
‘ And the most enviable—then, why then,

XLVIII.

‘ I’ll take to learning Greek, and Latin too,
‘ And all the Ologies and Onomies !
‘ And you shall teach Emanuel to pursue,
‘ If that be possible, by means of these,
‘ The purpose which we both must have in view
‘ On his behalf—not only, if you please,
‘ To earn his bread, but to redeem some day
‘ That noble fortune he has thrown away ! ’

XLIX.

With this remark, transported by the flow
Of his own eloquence, Herr Jonathan
Got up, and paced the chamber to and fro.
Exuberant applause of his pet plan
To such a climax grew, that, all aglow,
Clapping his hands, and cheering, he began,
‘ Long live Emanuel the First ! Long live
‘ His Queen, Cordelia the Superlative ! ’

L.

This outburst over, pantingly he dropped
Into his chair ; forth his bandana drew ;
Dumpled it up ; and, with the dumpling, mopped
The moisture from his face. A tear or two
Seized the occasion, ere this process stopped,
To mingle with the indiscriminate dew
That shingly suffused with a coarse grace
Of genuine kindness his brown beaming face.

LI.

Edelrath had been sitting all this while
Ill at his ease. The part of diplomat,
Whose function is to listen and to smile,
Evading this point, and suggesting that,
(Unsuited to his nature, and his style
Of conversation) kept him chafing at
A character which grew, with each fresh scene,
Harder to play than it at first had been ;

LII.

And yet his resolution to suppress
That character as soon as possible
Gave him no comfort ; for, to his distress,
He felt that he, meanwhile, must play it well,
Or gravely jeopardize the happiness,
Not only of the false Emanuel,
But of the true Cordelia, whose full part
Was hers already in the old man's heart.

LIII.

It seemed to him unjust, and puerile too,
In fact pure folly, that Glenaveril
Should sacrifice to a mere *quid pro quo*
The grand position he was called to fill
In his own country, lest his wife should know
(And, if she knew it, haply take it ill)
That her lord's name, and birth, and fortune, were
All three as noble as his character ;

LIV.

And yet, in spite of this conviction, he,
Who neither was by birth, nor any tie
But that of friendship, in the least degree
Connected with the social hierarchy
That claimed Glenaveril, seemed to breathe more free
In that Utopia, thro' whose hazy sky
Humanitarian aspirations swarmed,
And to winged life their vague ideals warmed.

LV.

In this divided and confused condition
Of all his sentiments, the most intense
And least resisted was the recognition
Of his host's genuine benevolence :
He had no heart to chill the ebullition
Of an enthusiasm so immense,
By hinting at what seemed the unpractical
And visionary nature of it all ;

LVI.

So, grasping Eckermann's right hand, he cried,
' My friend, (for friends we *must* be, I and you !)
' The questions you have broached are much too wide
' And serious for quick answer ; but we two
' Are closely in the self-same cause allied,
' And in the self-same spirit. We'll renew
' This subject by and by. It claims reflection.
' And first of all, if you have no objection,

LVII.

'Ere I can come to any clear result
'In my own mind about your plans, I fain
'Would, on some features of the case, consult
'With—our young friend. He must, himself, 'tis
plain,
'Decide on his own course. 'Twere difficult
'The course that's best for him to ascertain
'Without his knowing it. Utopia
'Must wait, meanwhile, till'—'Dinner's served,
papa!'

LVIII.

The tap of a child's hand on the shut door
Accompanied this pleasant intimation ;
And Edelrath, on hearing it, forebore
From any further sort of explanation.
'Dinner is served !' the child's voice cried once more,
And the new friends broke off their conversation.
Their next step led them, in the nick of time,
Down safely to the soup from the sublime.

END OF BOOK THE FOURTH.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

THE LOVERS.

CANTO I.—A HOME MINISTER.

CANTO II.—THE CRISIS.

CANTO III.—THE AVOWAL.

CANTO IV.—THE REVELATION.

CANTO V.—A RIDE ON A HOBBY HORSE.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CANTO I.

A HOME MINISTER.

I.

If thy tired mind, pursued by thought's vexation,
O reader of this salutary song,
Doth crave release from the preoccupation
Of cares which thinking serves but to prolong ;
If thy heart quivers from an oscillation,
Bewilderingly vehement and strong,
In that magnetic index of the soul
That, trembling, points to duty as its pole ;

II.

If in thy jaded spirit thou wouldst feel
One hour of pure repose, and with repose
A careless joy ;—go, join some family meal !
How calm, and full of cheerfulness, life grows
Where, round one board, the commonplace appeal
Of Daily Habit hath assembled those
Who dwell within its kind familiar fold
In unison together, young and old !

III.

What sparkling expectation fills with light
The children's eyes! How softly, one by one,
From each parental forehead out of sight
Fade the smoothed puckers, as the meal goes on!
How sociability aids appetite
To improve the charm which it bestows upon
Plain wholesome dishes that are 'not too good
'And bright for human nature's daily food!'

IV.

Getting the stimulus for which they pinéd,
The Bodily Organs gratefully provide
A welcome relaxation for the Mind ;
And, while around it all are occupied
So fast, that thinker is surprised to find
Its toilful self, not only unemployéd,
But even unimportant, in relation
To the importance of the situation.

V.

Obliged, and secretly well pleased, to be
The inert spectator of the careless play
Of forces from its tired control set free,
Like a schoolmaster on a holiday,
When forth from school with an exuberant glee
His pupils pour, the pedant steals away,
Unmissed, to some still corner of the brain,
Till the relentless schoolbell sounds again.

VI.

The Mind, whate'er its hunger be, declines
To eat and drink ; with a superb conceit,
To its Gross Bodily Organs it assigns
The gross performance of that daily feat ;
Yet tho', itself, the ascetic never dines,
Its friends it does to dinner oft entreat ;
And more intelligently practical
Than its intelligence is, after all,

VII.

The work of their Gross Organs, and its own,
On such occasions. O'er a glass of Moët,
The meek-eyed Miss, the Dame who leads the Town,
The Hero, the Philosopher, the Poet,
The Wit, the Statesman, once they settle down
To this performance, tho' they do not know it,
Are, thro' those organs, solving with success
Problems not one has had a mind to guess.

VIII.

And, if the Organs to the Mind should cry
'Tell us, O Teacher, all about this trout !'
What to the Organs could the Mind reply ?
'A trout's a vertebrate : its blood, no doubt,
'Tho' red, is cold ; and it has gills whereby
'It breathes, and fins whereby it swims about
'In mountain streams and lakes.' To which again
Might not the Organs answer, 'Well, what then ?

IX.

'What is the use of all this information
 'Wide of the point? What matters it to know
 Whether this trout's original habitation
 'Was in a lake, or stream? If you'd learn how
 'To appreciate a trout's true destination,
 'Make its acquaintance only when, as now,
 'The trout inhabits a Dutch sauce. 'Tis thus
 'Alone its qualities can interest us;

X.

'Thus only a good trout deserves, and gets,
 'Mankind's good word. Cooking is Character.
 'Then, this roast beef! What do you know of *its*
 'Good qualities? A ruminant mammifer,
 'That has four stomachs—is that all your wits
 'Can find out, all your wisdom can aver,
 'About this gifted creature, after all?
 'Four stomachs? What a noble animal!

XI.

'You, at your service, have but one, and that
 'You manage badly. Better even than you,
 'An ox can ruminate. And ruminate what?
 'Delicious things! fresh grass, and flowers, and
 dew!
 'The things you ruminate, you are puzzled at,
 'And saddened by. And, like an ox, you too
 'A yoke must bear. But then, the difference is
 'That with serenity the ox bears his.

XII.

‘ Head-work for both ! But his is, after all,
‘ The usefullest, and also the best done.
‘ Graceful, and grave, and nude, and classical,
‘ As a Greek athlete carved in bronze or stone,
‘ He foots the furrow, where behind him fall
‘ The gifts Demeter from her rural throne
‘ Full-handed flings. Enough ! This venison taste,
‘ Steeped in wild savors from the heathy waste !

XIII.

‘ And now, these tender vegetables try !
‘ They, in their youth, were flowers not long ago.
‘ And now, these fruits ! the loving legacy
‘ Of Autumn, whose last effort was to throw
‘ These gifts to us, and whisper with a sigh
‘ “ *Remember me !* ” Ah, frown not on us so,
‘ Thou melancholy master of us all !
‘ Relent, stern Mind, and join our festival !

XIV.

‘ Let us enjoy ourselves a little while !
‘ Let us be merry with the young ones here,
‘ And teach the old ones’ silence how to smile !
‘ Take all the rest of life, and be severe
‘ To other hours ! Let this, at least, beguile
‘ Even thy sombre self ! To mirth give ear !
‘ Suffer the impatient pen awhile to wait !
‘ Bid not the tired hand push away the plate !

XV.

‘Reproach us not, nor quarrel with us thus !
‘If thee we banter, ’tis for thine own good.
‘We know thy value, and by none of us
‘Is thy supremacy misunderstood ;
‘But why despise us? We are emulous
‘To serve thee well. And, if our simple food
‘Fit nourishment for thee thou dost not think,
‘Thou need’st not eat of it, but only drink.

XVI.

‘See, here is wine ! Ah ! scarcely doth it pass
‘Our lips to reach thee, ere we all can tell
‘Thou art no more morose ! Another glass !
‘Another and another ! That is well,
‘Now we are reconciled ! But why, alas,
‘Till now estranged ? O thus forever dwell
‘Blithe in our midst, companion kind and dear !
‘Be thou our president, and rule our cheer !

XVII.

‘Nothing are we without thee ! with thee, all !
‘Light our blind instincts by thy brightening wit !
‘Correct our course ! our wandering wills recall !
‘And our low mirth, by taking part in it,
‘Up to thyself exalt ! Thou canst not fall
‘In helping us to rise, and who so fit
‘To be our lord !’—This reconciliation
Takes place, without the least premeditation,

XVIII.

Between the Bodily Organs and the Mind,
During the progress of the family meal.
Ah, gentle hour, the blithest and most kind
Of all the day ! how sweetly didst thou steal
From Edelrath the doubts whence he could find
No issue clear, and for Glenaveril heal
The pangs of a remorse that scorched like fire
The pained fulfilment of his heart's desire !

XIX.

The children's rippling prattle, that promotes
The parents' grave unruffled gaiety,
Like rivulets revelling along flowery moats
Into calm rivers they enrich thereby :
Chance questions, light replies : gay anecdotes,
Laughter, not loud, but full of innocent joy :
The gurgling bottle, and the clinking glass ;
And little jokes that jostle as they pass :

XX.

The multifarious mirthfulness of these
Interfluent sounds continued hovering
Around that table, like the restless bees
That haunt the honied banquets in the Spring,
And in exchange for sweets and essences,
Music and movement to the blossoms bring,
As, coming, going, humming, glowing, they
From flower to flower inquisitively stray.

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XXI.

And thro' a mist of pleasantly confounded
Sensations, Edelrath, each time he viewed
Cordelia's quiet image thus surrounded,
Was more and more delightfully subdued
By the repose with which its charm abounded.
She sat, like one whose customary mood
Is less to talk than listen, her calm face
A little stooped, with an attentive grace ;

XXII.

Her body leaning backward in her chair ;
And her arms folded o'er her chest. She took
In all the conversation round her there,
More by the animation of her look
Than by her utterance, which was brief and rare,
A part that, written down into a book,
Would have seemed nothing, and yet was the soul,
The living source, and essence of the whole.

XXIII.

Now, welcoming with just a glance or tone
Of instantaneous subtle recognition
Some touching word, too timid all alone
To prosecute an unencouraged mission ;
Thus to another's utterance, by her own
Unuttered, yet expressive, intuition,
Giving the sweetness and lucidity
That rose at once to her responsive eye ;

XXIV.

Now, with a graceful movement of the head,
Wafting approval to some passing truth
Which, in its passage, else had fallen dead.

And all the while about her mobile mouth
That subtle curve continually played,
Whose magic neither beauty nor yet youth
Can to the beautiful and young impart,
Without a mystic mandate from the heart ;

XXV.

Only one painter in the world knew how
To draw it, and with Leonardo died
The secret granted no one else to know ;
'Twixt smiles and tears that curve, to both allied,
Hovers and flits, like the diaphanous bow
That's born of beams and dews ; and seems to hide
The source celestial, and yet feminine,
Of Virginal Maternity Divine.

XXVI.

She was not silent, tho' her words were few
And sober. But her presence served instead
Of speech ; and o'er the conversation threw
A charm all felt, whilst no one could have said
What cause it was attributable to.

Perhaps it was, that every heart and head
Grew conscious in her presence that its mood
Of feeling or of thought was understood.

XXVII.

Her attitude diffused a soothing sense
Of gentle power in undisturbed repose.
'Twas not the posture of indifference ;
Nor did the calm contour of it disclose
The rigid wariness that fears offence.
As to the bent in which its beauty grows
A windblown flower incessantly recurs,
So to that natural attitude of hers

XXVIII.

Cordelia, if forced out of it by chance,
Always relapsed, in outlines backward thrown,
That slanted to a slight predominance
Her figure's pure profile from throat to zone ;
Her earnest face, with softly-listening glance,
Over her bosom bent a little down,
And her arms folded ; arms whose perfect mould
Revealed no angle in their rounded fold !

XXIX.

The strange intelligence that seemed to teach
Not her eyes only, but the whole of her,
To be responsive to the gaze or speech
Of those around her, in its character
Had combinations which escaped the reach
Of Edelrath's endeavour to refer
The indefinite impressions they combined
To any marked exertion of the mind ;

XXX.

Patience was in them, without condescension,
And interest, free from curiosity ;
They were suffused with that unstrained attention
Which is not of the ear, nor of the eye,
But of the temperament ; without pretension,
Or effort, they were able to imply—
'Dismiss the interpreter ! we need him not,
'Sympathy's native tongue is polygot.'

XXXI.

One of those listeners was Cordelia,
Whose listening, as it were, completes, and sums
Up to its highest power, what others say.
The poem, to such listeners read, becomes
Poetry : what to them musicians play,
Turns into music : wandering thoughts find homes
Built for them by such listeners, where they tarry,
And with their wealthier kindred intermarry :

XXXII.

Words, for such listeners, always mean the best :
Wit's point is never blunted, Humour's wing
Never is broken, in appeals addressed
To their reception : and their listening
Imparts to tenderness the tenderest
Of its expressions : the most trivial thing
Assumes significance, and truth, and grace,
If in their fertile presence it takes place.

XXXIII.

Of all the gifts of genius none so rare
As that by genius to such listeners given.
Clumsy the most effective talkers are,
Compared to them. The greatest writers even
Their noblest flights, perchance, could never dare
Without imagining, at least, that Heaven
Will help the tidings they proclaim to find
At last some destined listener of this kind.

XXXIV.

The note, or verse, that, breathed to other ears,
Moved timidly, with the constrained unrest
Of a shy stranger who, faint-hearted fears
To be received like an unbidden guest,
And shrinks, mistaking even smiles for sneers,
Her mute regard could all at once invest
With such a sweet assurance, that its whole
Expression changed ; into a breathing soul

XXXV.

The soulless sound surprisingly dilated,
And said forthwith what it was meant to say.
To all around her she communicated
So much of her own self in this still way—
Her sunny gaiety, her unabated
Serenity and confidence—that they
Seemed like impersonations of her, all,
While she, herself, appeared impersonal.

XXXVI.

O supernatural gift ! mysterious dower
Of woman's sex ! which those who most have striven
Against thine influence most revere ! Strange power
Once in her life to every woman given,
If given her only for a single hour,
And by some women unrelinquished even
In that still-beautiful old age of theirs,
Whose beauty dwells in wrinkles and grey hairs !

XXXVII.

Victorious even in defeat ! Evaded
Only to be regretted ! Shunned or sought,
Still, always felt ! whose potent witchcraft aided
The conquest of the Golden Fleece, and wrought
The doom of Troy ! whose smile hath oft persuaded
Embattled hosts to yield ! whose sigh to naught
Hath oft reduced the mighty ones of earth !
Creator, and destroyer of man's hearth !

XXXVIII.

Eternal, and yet rarely durable !
Strongest when weakest, when submissive most
Supreme ! What art thou, enigmatic spell,
Unspoken, yet obeyed, whose bliss hath cost
Such bale and dole, in whose delights do dwell
So many tears, and yet whose presence lost
Would be the loss of joy's main pedestal ?
Thy name is Love, for one, and Charm, for all.

XXXIX.

Edelrath shared, content, the common fate
Of that glad family group within whose fold
He seemed to be already, less a late
Invited guest, than a familiar old
Established member; and, subordinate
Completely to the charm whose power controlled
Its magic circle, he, too, felt the sway
Of the sweet witchcraft of Cordelia.

XL.

This much not only to himself he owned,
But to Glenaveril too; when, dinner done,
Into the dreamy garden, arm enwound
In arm, the two friends wandered forth alone.
Still glowed the lingering sunset light around
The cypress allies; and, with sullen tone,
And clumsy wing, dim beetles here and there
Made sudden darts about the dusky air.

XLI.

Glenaveril's heart was full. He could not rest.
He felt the crisis of his life at hand,
And was resolved to know the worst or best.
Out of the garden, into the dim land
Beyond it, dragging Edelrath, he pressed
Forward; nor paused until at length his hand
Upon the young man's shoulder Edelrath
Laid heavily, and said, 'Where leads this path?'

XLII.

‘As far as may be,’ sighed Glenaveril,
‘Away from those who must not overhear
‘The tumult of a heart I cannot still.
‘Fain would I pour into thy trusted ear
‘This growing trouble.’ ‘Pour, then, to the fill!’
Cried Edelrath, ‘for not a soul is near.
‘But I am tired. Upon this broken wall
‘Let us sit down, till thou hast told me all.’

XLIII.

‘So be it,’ said the other. ‘This will do.’
For round he gazed, and saw, beneath them deep,
The villa, like a glow-worm in the dew,
Lit from within, half hidden by a heap
Of dusky trees; above the hills a few
Large stars shone faintly: darkness lay, like sleep,
On the lone waters; and, save Ivor’s breast,
All things in heaven and earth were hushed to rest.



CANTO II.

THE CRISIS.

I.

' I AM resolved,' said Ivor, ' that to-night
' This purgatorial period shall end,
' And that the sun, on his return, shall light
' Steps certain of the goal to which they tend.
' That sun already, every month more bright,
' Returning like an unreprouchful friend,
' Month after month has seemed to sanctify
' The truth entangled in a twofold lie ;

II.

' A false-named life that from a false-named death
' Is dated ! How that glowing truth, the sun,
' Laughs at the names men glory in, beneath
' His beams that shine impartially upon
' All who within their warmth draw living breath !
' All names are only social fictions: None
' Is Nature's gift. Nature, our common mother,
' Knows us not more by one name than another.

III.

'Forth she hath sent us into life, endowed
 'With two great gifts, a body and a soul ;
'And, for our use of these, account is owed,
 'I grant it, when, arrived at Nature's goal,
'We to her hand restore the gifts bestowed
 'On every life, that for the Living Whole
'Employs them well or ill. But names are not
'The gifts her children have from Nature got ;

IV.

'And she, when to her breast she summoneth
 'Those children back, knows where to find them all,
'Nameless or named. "Go," unto each she saith,
 "Go, child ! be born, and live till I recall
'"The life that now I give thee ; then, beneath
 " 'The beard of manhood, or the hoary pall
'"Of age, thro' all disguises o'er him piled,
'"Be sure that I shall recognise my child !"

V.

'Whence come to us, meanwhile, the names we bear ?
 'Tis here we got them, where we cannot stay,
'And where, altho' they may have cost us dear,
 'We needs must leave them when we pass away.
'And what, then, is a name ? 'Tis what we wear,
 'Not what we are. Each name's a mask, I say,
'So fixed to a man's face, there is no seeing
'That what that mask hides is a human being.

VI.

‘If here be falsehood, it is not in me ;
 ‘Tis in the mask. Nor is this mask a lie
 ‘Falsar than any other mask would be.
 ‘Once, in an hour of dreadful agony,
 ‘Two masks fell off. There was a struggle. He
 ‘That’s dead took mine away with him, and I
 ‘Was left with his. I have not stolen it,
 ‘And who is injured if it chance to fit?’

VII.

Edelrath sighed. ‘Sophism is, my dear
 ‘Glenaveril, Guilt’s Advocate,’ he said.
 ‘No one accuses thee. But ah, forbear
 ‘To accuse thyself by calling in the aid
 ‘Of such a pleader! Let us try to clear
 ‘This situation. My appeal is made,
 ‘Not to the passions of the partisan,
 ‘But to the conscience of an honest man.

VIII.

‘Recall that letter from Cordelia. Well,
 ‘To whom was it addressed? Ivor, reply
 ‘Without evasion.’ ‘To Emanuel.’
 ‘Who wrote the answer to that letter?’ ‘I.’
 ‘In whose name?’ ‘His.’ ‘And doth thy reason
 tell
 ‘Thy conscience, that was no disloyalty?’
 ‘Emanuel authorised the act, I say.’
 ‘Emanuel ! yes, but did Cordelia?’

IX.

Glenaveril was silent. ' 'Twas her lot,
 'Not his, it dealt with, and I ask again.'
'That letter, was it loyal?' 'It was not,'
 Sighed Ivor, 'I admit it.' 'Then 'tis plain,'
Continued the old man, 'that the first knot
 'In the long tangle of this fatal skein
'Was a disloyal act. We are agreed
'Thus far, and to the next knot I proceed.

X.

'A letter to a woman was addressed ;
 ' 'Twas signed Emanuel—a name untrue ;
'The writer of it ardently professed
 'Love for the woman it was written to ;
'But did the man who rightfully possessed
 'The name, in mockery lent by him to you,
'Feel for that woman any one of those
'Feelings your words would lead her to suppose ?

XI.

'To ask this question is, I need not say,
 'To answer it. I know, indeed, as well,
'And so do you, as if the poor dead clay
 'Whose name you took were still alive to tell,
'No love was ever for Cordelia
 'Felt or affected by Emanuel.
'Thus was one falsehood in that letter used
'To foist another on a faith abused.

XII.

'The feelings of Emanuel we know ;
'But what were thine own feelings, Ivor, when
'Love, for another, to another, thou
'Didst thus profess ?' 'Alas, I knew not then,'
Said Ivor, 'what I felt !' 'And art thou now
'Still ignorant ?' said Edelrath. Again
Glenaveril gave no answer but a sigh,
A sigh of pain. Moved by that mute reply,

XIII.

The old man, too, was silent, and his heart
Ached with the task, on which he still was bent,
Of probing Ivor's wound in every part.
'My child,' he sighed at length, 'if thou hadst sent
'That letter, couldst thou now thank Heaven thou art
'Guiltless of crime, and but the innocent
'Victim of a mistake, a fatal one,
'For which the blame is mine, and mine alone ?

XIV.

'Thus *my* good faith, my peace of mind, in fine
'My conscience, is with thine entangled too
'In this dilemma : and 'tis not by thine
'Alone that I invoke thee to undo
'The knot that's strangling us : it is by mine,
'Which is the most committed of the two ;
'Nor yet for my sake only, but far more
'For hers, in whom truth's self thou dost adore !

XV.

'For friendship's sake, for love's sake, for the sake
 'Of all that's true and honest, Ivor, and
 'In her name, for no other will I take
 'To consecrate these words—give me thy hand
 'And look me in the face—I do not make
 'Any entreaty to thee—I command
 'And summon thee, as the sworn justicer
 'Of her wronged cause—avow the truth to her !'

XVI.

Glenaveril bounded, breathless, from the wall.
 'Impossible !' he cried, 'impossible !
 'You calmly bid me kill her—that is all !
 'Kill her, and be despised by her as well !
 'Justice? Good heavens, justice ! Rather call
 'This murderous mandate Moloch's oracle !'
 'Hush !' answered Edelrath, 'thou wilt not kill,
 'Nor be despised by, her, Glenaveril.

XVII.

'Calm thyself. I have read Cordelia
 'With eyes unprejudiced, nor do I fear
 'Her death. The truth, which she must know some
 day,
 'Will kill her not. But she will have to bear
 'A bitter suffering, and to work her way
 'Thro' a great crisis. That girl's soul is clear
 'As mountain lakes are under cloudless skies ;
 'But mountain lakes, when thunderstorms chastise

XVIII.

‘ Their stillness, and search all their deeps, no doubt
‘ Are terrible. How will Cordelia
‘ The revelation bear, when she finds out
‘ That all her trust and truth have gone astray,
‘ And that her fondest faith has brought about
‘ Her cruellest deception? Hard to say!
‘ But from this question ’tis too late to shrink;
‘ And, Ivor, let me tell thee what I think.

XIX.

‘ I do not fear for her the overflow
‘ Of any violent emotion—scorn,
‘ Resentment, anger, indignation. No,
‘ That which my fears foresee is a forlorn
‘ Flat, settled sadness; the quiescent woe
‘ Of an un murmuring resignation, born
‘ Of loss of power, not loss of hope alone;
‘ Not death, but life reduced to a lower tone.

XX.

‘ Faith, O my child, resembles nothing less
‘ Than the false symbol given her by mankind.
‘ The anchor, by the drifting ship’s distress
‘ Dragged thro’ the deep sea sands, at first may find
‘ No durable stay; but round the carcasses
‘ Of other wrecks, or rocks, or reefs, ’twill bind
‘ Sooner or later the tenacious grip
‘ Of its toothed fluke, that lets no chances slip.

XXI.

‘ It shifts about in search of where to dwell,
‘ And ever, in the course of its migration,
‘ What to the anchor is an obstacle
‘ Is to the anchored ship her life’s salvation.
‘ This image, Ivor, represents not well
‘ The virtue which mankind’s imagination
‘ Associates with it. Of all fragile things
‘ Faith is the frailest, if where faith first clings

XXII.

‘ It cannot rest. What on this human earth
‘ Does faith resemble? Nothing! To explain
‘ Were to distort its nature. Second birth
‘ It knows not. Love may go and come again ;
‘ Spring every year replenishes the dearth
‘ By Winter left ; and leafless trees retain
‘ Force for fresh leafage. But nought fructifies
‘ Ever again the soil wherein faith dies.

XXIII.

‘ I oft have wondered, never dared to guess,
‘ What would a martyr feel if, after death,
‘ He found that, resolute thro’ all distress
‘ And torment, he had died with dauntless faith
‘ For an imposture? All the promises
‘ Of Paradise—the amaranthine wreath,
‘ The shining robe, the seat beside the throne,
‘ The palms, the psalms, the harp of heavenly tone—

XXIV.

' All these I doubt not that, without regret,
 ' That soul deceived would lovingly resign,
 ' Could it but find in Paradise, even yet
 ' As here it found on earth, the same Divine
 ' Consoler, still by woes and foes beset,
 ' Still forced to drink the hyssop in the wine,
 ' Still persecuted, still misunderstood,
 ' And scorned, and scourged, and nailed upon the rood,

XXV.

' Yet preaching still, to Spirits that respond,
 ' An unrecanted gospel ; pointing still
 ' With smiling patientness, as firm, as fond,
 ' And as unflinching under every ill,
 ' To some imperishable Hope Beyond ;
 ' And, with a confidence no doubt can chill,
 ' Still promising, altho' delayed perchance
 ' For countless lives, the Soul's Deliverance.

XXVI.

' Most probably, in spite of hope deferred
 ' And pain prolonged, the martyr, in that case,
 ' Soon as again the Master's voice he heard,
 ' That voice, thro' danger, suffering, and disgrace,
 ' Would follow unreprouchful, undeterred,
 ' From life to life, from death to death, from place
 ' To place, forever ; for, tho' sorely tried,
 ' His faith by trial would be fortified ;

XXVII.

‘ But think ! if, in some vague unhopeful sphere,
‘ Where the unrecompensed remembrances
‘ Of sorrows and afflictions suffered here
‘ Must needs resign, not only promised bliss,
‘ But even that final consolation drear,
‘ The prospect of insensible nothingness,
‘ Some Spirit, lost and desolate as his own,
‘ Should sigh to him in deprecative tone,

XXVIII.

“ Brother, forgive me, for I meant the best !
“ The power to keep the promises I gave
“ I have not. I beheld man’s life oppressed
“ With suffering, and man’s end a hopeless grave ;
“ The sight of so much misery filled my breast
“ With pity, and a passionate wish to save ;
“ I took to my own heart, and made it mine,
“ The wretchedness of all ; I deemed divine

XXIX.

“ The sacrificial pang, thro’ which I passed
“ That by its suffering I might recompense
“ The sufferings of others with some vast
“ And pure beatitude, no less immense.
“ I loved, and I was ignorant, in the past ;
“ But, loving more than others, more intense
“ Than theirs was my perception of that goal
“ To seek which seemed the errand of the soul.

XXX.

‘“ I sought to comfort and to heal. I knew
 ‘“ That Hope, the everlasting comforter,
 ‘“ Is to man’s heart as to the earth heaven’s dew,
 ‘“ And I could, in exchange for Faith, confer
 ‘“ That gift on all. That gift I gave thee, too.
 ‘“ ’Twas all I had to give. Nought heavenlier
 ‘“ Was given to me, and I can give no other.
 ‘“ I gave thee Hope. Dost thou resent it, brother ?”

XXXI.

‘ Glenaveril, would that martyr, hearing this,
 ‘ Reclaim his faith ? or what would he reply ?
 ‘ I know not. Ask it of the hearts whose bliss
 ‘ Was in some trust that has been doomed to die :
 ‘ The maiden ruined by a faithless kiss :
 ‘ The wife abandoned by a broken tie :
 ‘ Ask it of Fallen States that have believed
 ‘ In Flattering Orators whose tongues deceived :

XXXII.

‘ Ask Timon what he did with all the gold
 ‘ By Zeus a second time to him assigned,
 ‘ That the poor wretch might be thereby consoled
 ‘ For having too long trusted in mankind.
 ‘ ’Tis said that it consoled him not. Faith’s hold,
 ‘ Once loosed on life, no anchorage there could find :
 ‘ And the recluse rejected with disdain
 ‘ A wealth he never could enjoy again.

XXXIII.

'Cordelia has a creed whereby to live ;
'And she has faith in it. Her creed we know ;
'Tis Love Predestined. Interrogative
'However, only, is that faith just now ;
'It asks a question to which life may give
'A negative answer. If she finds that thou
'Art not the man whose mission was to prove
'Her faith well-founded in Predestined Love,

XXXIV.

'What then ? This prophecy I venture on :
'Her faith its first half-opened buds may shed,
'Frostbitten ; but 'twill live and flower anon,
'Because the roots of it will not be dead.
'To-day's is followed by to-morrow's sun :
'The heart has many seasons : and the bed
'Of the March violet is securely made
'In snowy February's coldest shade :

XXXV.

'Tho', dreamless, it perchance may sleep till then
'Beneath the snowdrift of Indifference,
'Her heart, hereafter, will awake again,
'Answering the Voice of Love with a new sense
'Unstirred as yet. For, even more than men,
'Women are born, by birth's improvidence,
'In debt to Love, a creditor that knows
'How to exact the most his debtor owes !

XXXVI

'Glenaveril, do thy duty, as beseems
'The son of sires all noble, and all brave !
'Cordelia loves thee. Why? Because she deems
'Thou art the man to whom her love she gave
'When she had seen him only in her dreams.
'Cheat not her faith ! nor steal from that man's
grave
'A love which, tho' so fanciful, is still
'So trustful, too. *Sois vrai, Glenaveril !*

XXXVII.

'Tell her the truth. She may not love thee then,
'But she will owe thy love one gift, the best
'It now can give her—power to love again,
'With faith redeemed from error, and still blest
'By faith's consolatory boon to men,
'Hope in the future.' With a fierce unrest
Glenaveril writhed ; and, quivering all over,
'Cruel,' he cried, 'Canst thou not see I love her?'

XXXVIII.

'Thou say'st thou lovest her,' Edelrath replied,
'Yet to thy love of her wouldst sacrifice
'All that is loveliest in her ! ah,' he sighed,
'Dost thou even know what love is? Love's a vice,
'Of every vice perchance the most allied
'To cruelty, if, whatsoe'er the price
'The loved one's happiness to love may cost,
'That price love grudges lest its own be lost.

XXXIX.

'Remember Usinara!' Vacantly
 Glenaveril murmured, 'Never did I hear
 'That name before. What's Usinara?' 'Ay,'
 Said Edelrath, 'thy way would seem more clear,
 'And easier too, perchance, if thou, as I,
 'Hadst read the Mâhabhârata! Know, dear
 'Glenaveril, Usinara was a king
 'In the Far East, when time was in its spring,

XL.

'And gods, and men, and even beasts, knew how
 'To understand each other better than
 'They seem to understand each other now;
 'And Usinara was, like thee, a man
 'Who thought he loved. The object, wouldst thou
 know,
 'Of that man's love? 'Twas justice. But who can
 'Love justly? From this story of the Dove
 'And Falcon learn, Glenaveril, how to love!'

XLI.

And Edelrath, already far away
 In the Far East, thus uttered his dark saying:
 'King Usinara, at the dawn of day,
 'Was, by the sacred banks of Jumna, praying;
 'When to his breast a dove, that all the way
 'A falcon followed fast, flew down, essaying
 'To find safe refuge on that royal breast;
 'So round the bird the kind king wrapped his vest.

XLII.

- 'Then to the King the Falcon flew. Said he
 " Hail, noble King! May all that's thine be
 more !
" But something hast thou which belongs to me,
 " Hid in thy royal robe. Great King, restore
" What Justice, by my voice, demands of thee !"
 " Nay, ne'er shall Justice," said the King, " de-
 plore
" That Usinara to their foes betrayed
" The friendless who appealed to him for aid !"

XLIII.

- 'Forthwith the Falcon answered, " Far and wide
 " Is thy fidelity to duty known ;
" Yet duty's simplest rule thou sett'st aside,
 " When him that from thee claims what is his own
" Away thou sendest with his claim denied.
 " That Dove by me was fairly hunted down ;
" 'Tis mine, not thine. My right to it is good ;
" What right hast thou to rob me of my food ?"

XLIV.

- " Great Falcon," said the monarch, " understand
 " That pity is the duty of a king.
" Behold this little trembler in my hand,
 " See how thy presence sets it fluttering !
" Dost thou not know, then, the divine command ?
 " Three sins there be, beyond all pardoning :
" A Brahmin, or a sacred cow, to slay,
" Or him that in thee trusteth to betray."

XLV.

'Whereto the Falcon. "By their nourishment
 "All creatures live ; and he that takes away
 "From any living creature what God meant
 "For its sustainment, doth that creature slay.
 "If thou to me the food by Indra sent
 "Denyest, O King, I needs must die ; and they
 "Whose lives upon mine own depend, my wife
 "And children four, thou dost deprive of life ;

XLVI.

"Thus, to prolong one life whose hour is due
 "To nature's claim, by Indra's will decreed,
 "Six times as many murders dost thou do,
 "And yet to Pity dost impute the deed !
 "Can Duty contradict herself by two
 "Opposed commands, yet both be right ? Take
 heed !
 "And search thyself, lest this confusion be
 "Not in thy kingly duty, but in thee."

XLVII.

"Wisely thou speakest," said the King. "Thy
 words,
 "O Falcon, stir my mind, altho' my heart
 "They leave untouched. Suparn, the King of Birds,
 "Whose lore is more than man's, methinks thou art !
 "I cannot answer thee. Thy speech accords
 "With what seems just. Yet, tho' not mine the art
 "To express it rightly, something in me, some
 "Deep voiceless instinct, eloquently dumb,

XLVIII.

“ Forbids me to betray to instant death
“ This helpless creature that hath trusted me.
“ I would not wrong thee, Falcon. Waste not breath
“ In craving what I cannot grant. But see !
“ Search thou my realm all round, from holt to heath,
“ From hill to vale, from field to forest, free
“ To choose whate’er thou wilt from herd, or drove,
“ Or fold, or flock, in ransom for this Dove !”

XLIX.

“ Nay, neither mutton, nor yet venison,” said
“ The Falcon, “ is the food that I can eat ;
“ When Indra made all living things, he made
“ The dove to be the falcon’s natural meat.”
“ Then,” cried the King, “ take something else
instead !
“ I care not what. My realm is rich and great,
“ So is my heart. I grudge not what I give.
“ Take all thou wilt—except this fugitive !”

L.

“ See,” said the Falcon, “ how one step aside
“ From simple duty, seem it ne’er so small,
“ Leads on to errors reaching far and wide
“ From bad to worse ! My rightful due is all
“ I ask of thee ; my right thou hast denied,
“ And thereby done me wrong : yet dost thou call
“ All things by their wrong names, rather than do
“ One thing that’s right, if it be painful too.

LI.

- “ Not only of my lawful nourishment
 “ Thou dost defraud me, but wouldst leave me not
 “ My last right left—that robbery to resent.
 “ Sweet is the gratitude from others got
 “ For gifts bestowed ; and sweet it is to vent
 “ In cheap compassion for another’s lot
 “ The easy impulse of benevolence ;
 “ And thou these sweets wouldst taste at my expense ;

LII.

- “ Thou art not just, yet generous thou wouldst be ;
 “ Thou robb’st me of my right, yet wouldst bestow
 “ Upon me gifts that are no use to me ;
 “ Wherefore, O King ? That thou may’st cheaply
 know
 “ (Having procured it at no cost to thee)
 “ The pleasantness of virtue’s genial glow !
 “ It pleaseth thee to offer flock and herd ;
 “ But it would pain thee to give up that bird ;

LIII.

- “ And what is pleasant to thyself thou dost,
 “ By what to me is painful purchasing
 “ The lazy luxury of appearing just
 “ And generous both !” At this, the startled King,
 ‘ Like thee, Glenaveril, finding himself thrust
 “ Twixt a dilemma’s horns, began to wring
 ‘ His hands, as thou dost, and like thee, to cry
 “ Impossible !” Then did the Falcon fly

LIV.

' Up to the King, and whisper in his ear
 " 'So be it ! thou bidst me choose. I choose what's
 fit ;
 " " And, since that Dove is to thy heart so dear,
 " " Give me, O generous King, instead of it,
 " " Of thine own flesh the Dove's full weight. I swear
 " " That I will claim no more, if thou submit
 " " To this condition." And the King replied,
 " " Thy claim is just ! It shall be satisfied."

LV.

' Then Usinara bade his servants bring
 ' The balance from his treasure-house, and put
 ' The Dove into one scale of it. The King
 ' His bosom bared, and drew his sword, and cut
 ' Flesh from the bone, and flung it quivering
 ' And bleeding down into the other. But
 ' The Dove outweighed the King's flesh. And again
 ' He cut himself, and cut, and cut—in vain !

LVI.

' For every time that Usinara threw
 ' More of his flesh into one scale, the weight
 ' Of the Dove heavier in the other grew,
 ' Until at last, bewildered, desperate,
 ' Dripping from head to foot with gory dew,
 ' Into that scale's grim shambles, with a great
 ' Cry of despair, the monarch leapt, and stood,
 ' Trampling beneath him his own flesh and blood.

LVII.

' Then, from the other scale, and high above
 ' The head of Usinara, in the air
 ' Hovering where poised the Falcon, rose the Dove ;
 ' And forthwith both the Dove and Falcon were
 ' Transfigured ; and a sudden glory clove
 ' The clouds, which to its inmost heart laid bare
 ' The heaven of heavens. Divinely musical
 ' A voice said, " I am Indra, Lord of All,

LVIII.

" And of My Will an Effluence Divine
 " Was yonder Dove. This earth, so said thy fame,
 " Contained no nobler character than thine ;
 " To test that noble character we came,
 " And well hath been accomplished our design !
 " Weighed in our balance, we thy worth proclaim
 " True to the test. Thy life on earth is o'er,
 " For earthly life can teach thee nothing more ;

LIX.

" Duty's whole lesson thou hast learned at last,
 " Which in self-sacrifice begins and ends.
 " By the rejection of thyself thou hast
 " Regained the Infinite, whose life transcends
 " All personality. Behold how vast
 " The sphere to which thy spirit now extends
 " Its flight unfettered ! Usinara, rise,
 " And take thy place among the deities !

LX.

“So long as here on earth thy deed shall be
 “Remembered, and thy name to men endeared,
 “So long in Heaven thy place by mine shall be,
 “There by men’s grateful reverence ensphered !
 “For the gods’ empire is man’s memory
 “Of what deserves by man to be revered.””
 Edelrath paused. He was, himself, affected
 By his own tale. Defeated and dejected,

LXI.

Glenaveril said nothing. With a sigh
 His Mentor in a musing tone went on,
 ‘Good heavens, Glenaveril ! What a mockery,
 ‘To think that missionaries, scarcely one
 ‘Of whom could probably, were he to try,
 ‘Translate the scriptures, he relies upon
 ‘For his own creed, from the original text,
 ‘Should go forth annually unperplexed

LXII.

‘To teach a people with a literature
 ‘Like this ! Observe how in this story live
 ‘Together as it were, and each secure,
 ‘The Christian sentiment which bids us strive
 ‘To crucify ourselves, and, plain and pure,
 ‘Kant’s Categorical Imperative.
 ‘Listen to both, my child, and their advice
 ‘Reject not. Courage, and self-sacrifice !’

LXIII.

As Edelrath truth's painful cause thus pleaded,
 Glenaveril's heart was to his own inspection
 Laid bare. To vehement revolt succeeded
 The lassitude of a profound dejection.
 The sufferer's silent grief was not unheeded ;
 And with a deep compassionate affection
 The old man, bending over him, went on,
 'Thee, other duties still reclaim, my son !

LXIV.

'Attribute not to Chance, the name, nor yet
 'The place in life, which all at birth receive
 'From Nature's hand—as thou miscallest it,
 'Or from a Will Divine, as I believe.
 'Each to that Will Divine must needs submit ;
 'None can oppose, evade it, or deceive ;
 'Nature, whom thou invokest, doth pursue
 'Her course obedient to its mandate too ;

LXV.

'And her own power she exercises still
 'Under conditions that do bounds impose
 'On what thou vainly callest Nature's will.
 'Children of Nature, say'st thou ? Who are those ?
 'I know them not. Nor thou, Glenaveril.
 'One way to bring forth children Nature knows,
 'And thou and I know that she knows no other,
 'To every child a father and a mother !

LXVI.

' Succession is the law that regulates
 ' Life's course thro' every channel great or small.
 ' All things on earth succeed each other, States,
 ' Tribes, Families, Societies, and all
 ' That force, by force replaced, which animates
 ' Creation! Even the individual,
 ' Transmitter and inheritor in one,
 ' Still to himself succeeds as he lives on ;

LXVII.

' Each is his own successor day by day.
 ' The day that's come is by the day that's past
 ' Determined. Dream of freedom as we may,
 ' This law remains inexorable. Caste
 ' Was on its permanence based ; and who shall say
 ' A system which hath managed to outlast
 ' All other systems of society,
 ' Hath not more wisdom in it than the cry

LXVIII.

' That stirs to a perpetual unrest
 ' Our modern world, and fools the multitude
 ' To which its invocation is addressed ?
 ' Freedom, Equality, and Brotherhood !
 ' The wishes these three words in each man's breast
 ' Awaken, if he rightly understood
 ' Their true relation to his faculties,
 ' He would reject the moment they arise.

LXIX.

' Already the societies upset
 ' By these false cries, are struggling to regain
 ' That lost stability, which they regret,
 ' And which societies, they scorn, retain.
 ' Nobility's an institution yet
 ' Permitted upon sufferance to remain ;
 ' And to that institution's not-unneeded
 ' Defence and aid thou hast by birth succeeded.

LXX.

' 'Tis, as its name implies, a noble one ;
 ' Yet a Nobility that values not
 ' The power produced by usefulness alone,
 ' Only enfeebles like a morbid spot
 ' The social body it remains upon.
 ' And aristocracy begins to rot
 Into a vicious, mischievous *noblesse*,
 When it exchanges power for idleness ;

LXXI.

' But power means duty. Instinct guarantees
 ' The eternity of titles. Every State,
 ' Savage or civilized, abounds in these.
 ' The guillotine could not decapitate
 ' Either the titles or the pedigrees
 ' Of French Nobility. At any rate
 ' They still exist. But what exist no more
 ' Are both the rights and duties they once bore.

LXXII.

' I have been told that in no other nation
' Are titles more innumerable than
' In the American Confederation ;
' Where, be he Judge or General, every man
' Is designated by his rank and station,
' And every matron is, on the same plan,
' Called Mrs. Something This, or Something That ;
' Moreover, what seems most to wonder at

LXXIII.

' Is that, in that free democratic land,
' The fact of being free-born satisfies
' No one. All come, they bid you understand,
' From the Old Knickerbocker Families,
' Or Cavaliers, or Pilgrim Fathers, and
' Every American I meet with tries
' To prove to me he can his lineage trace
' From the known head of some high English race.

LXXIV.

' I'm told that in New York, Fifth Avenue
' Despises Broadway ; and, with souls exclusive,
' They who do silken stockings sell eschew
' Those who sell cotton stockings. So delusive
' Are all attempts to equalize the Few
' And Many ! so tenacious, so intrusive,
' The instinct that ascribes superiority
' To persons who are not of the majority !

LXXV.

‘ England’s Old Upper Class, whereof thou art,
‘ Some ruling influence still retains : and thou
‘ Hast in its honourable toils a part
‘ Thou canst not honourably disavow.
‘ Hast thou the right, even if thou hast the heart,
‘ (Thou, its born champion !) to abandon now
‘ The standard of a power whose past was splendid,
‘ When its last strongholds are so ill defended ?

LXXVI.

‘ Resume thy place among the ranks of those
‘ Whose cause is thine ! Take back thy noble name,
‘ Its noble duties seek not to oppose,
‘ And, with those duties nobly done, reclaim
‘ The rich rewards that Duty still bestows
‘ On all who tread without reproach or blame
‘ Her painful paths ! Nothing is yet too late.
‘ Thine accident—that agitated state

LXXVII.

‘ In which the effects of it so long retained
‘ Thy faculties—the wish to hear from me—
‘ All these will have sufficiently explained
‘ Thy silence until now. Nor doubt that she
‘ Will understand why thou hast thus refrained
‘ From telling her what can no longer be
‘ Without disloyal reticence suppressed.
‘ Courage ! Speak truth, and leave to God the rest !’

LXXVIII.

Whilst Edelrath was to Glenaveril
Thus offering words of sad encouragement
To which, still silent, and dejected still,
His listener yielded a forlorn assent,
The two friends had arisen, and down the hill
Their homeward steps toward the house were bent ;
Whence now, from windows comfortably lit,
And softened by dim draperies curtaining it,

LXXIX.

The lamplight, glimmering, golden carpets laid
Between the shadows of the trees. All round,
Night's influence had that twofold silence made
Which seems the visible vacancy of sound ;
A silence to the ear, a something said
Silently to the eye. From seas profound
And deserts vast that silence sometimes speaks,
As here it spake from the hushed mountain peaks

LXXX.

That far off in the solemn stillness shone,
And from the dusky cypress tops below.
Ah, blest tranquility reserved alone
To the mute witnesses of many a woe
And joy whose silence is a troubled one !
As the two friends approached it the warm glow
That streamed towards them from the casement-door
Was darkened by a form it floated o'er ;

LXXXI.

And in that moment, with a piercing thrill
Of soft, but inconsolable despair,
Like one resigned to death, Glenaveril
Beheld Cordelia. Into the dim air
She stepped, looked round, and lingeringly still
Her image paused upon the marble stair,
Bathed in the glow the lamplight o'er it cast,
Then down into the cypress shade she passed.

LXXXII.

The cypress shade—sad darkness dedicate
To death, to sorrow, and to memory !
He felt that there the angel of his fate
Was leaving him, and that futurity
Hovered in that dark shade which seemed to wait
Like an impatient grave, for hope's last sigh.
And, while he felt all this, the spot where stood
Cordelia, had become a solitude.

LXXXIII.

As if a statue from its pedestal
Should vanish while the gazer looks at it !
Her disappearance summoned, like the call
Of the Last Judgment, from its sombre pit
Glenaveril's spirit to the Judgment Hall.
He started shuddering ; and, with sinews knit,
Hands clenched, as one on desperate errand bent,
He plunged into the shadow where she went.

CANTO III.

THE AVOWAL.

I.

GLENAVERIL, near the alley's outlet, saw
Cordelia passing from its moon-girt shade
Into the silvered space beyond. In awe
Of his own beating heart, he paused, afraid
Either to follow her, or to withdraw.

A faintness overcame him, and he stayed
Leaning against the statue of a Faun
That stood between the alley and the lawn.

II.

How feels the surgeon when he operates
For the first time, with an unpractised knife,
Knowing that on the trial which awaits
His novice nerves depends a human life?
And knowing, too, that if he hesitates
Or trembles at the prospect of his strife
With death for life's adroit redemption, he,
Before that strife begins, must vanquished be?

III.

How feels he when his pausing hand's about
To plunge thro' palpitating flesh the steel,
Which must be murderous if it miss one route
Thro' all those living fibres, that conceal
The lair it darkly searches to pluck out
Death, without injuring life? How doth he feel
When, thro' the red obscurity thus wrought
Around its path, that steel glides swift as thought?

IV.

Knows he not that his skill's insidious foe,
Roused to resistance by his bold attack,
With every kind of obstacle will strow
His sanguinary weapon's painful track,
Accumulating perils to o'erthrow
Safety's one only chance? and that, alack,
That chance he misses if he reaches not,
Or by a hairsbreadth overshoots, the spot

V.

Where death, thro' life's deep labyrinth hunted, hides
Its power in some fine nerve or particle
Of sensitive matter? Knows he not besides
That it is insufficient to expel
Death's presence from the haunt where it resides,
But he must cut off the retreat as well
Of life, that, faint with terror, seeks to quit
The bloodstained field where he hath fought for it?

VI.

All that the surgeon, at his first essay,
Feels, knowing this, undaunted tho' untried,
Glenaveril felt in a profound dismay,
Without the surgeon's fortifying pride
In his vocation : and his strength gave way
Before a prospect which so terrified
And staggered him that, sick and faint, he flung
His arms about that statue, and there clung.

VII.

From this drear trance the pressure, light yet warm,
Of a soft hand (how well its touch he knew !)
Released him with a charitable charm.
Before him stood Cordelia. She drew
Gently within her own Glenaveril's arm,
And led him where the trickling moonbeam threw
Athwart a bench, between the leaves that quite
Embowered it, sprinkled drops of silver light.

VIII.

There, speechless, he sat down with drooping head,
And on a sandgrain sparkling in the path
His gaze mechanically riveted.
'Your conversation with Herr Edelrath,'
Cordelia in a grave sweet accent said,
(His nerveless hand in hers still keeping) 'hath
'Profoundly troubled you, Emanuel,
'And ah, I understand this trouble well !

IX.

' You have been talking, you and he, to-night
' Of that poor friend, so dear to both, I know,
' Who perished in your presence, and in spite
' Of all your efforts. And those efforts now
' (Because the sole reward that could requite
' Such efforts, fate vouchsafed not to bestow)
' Revenge themselves upon their ill-success,
' By filling memory with remorsefulness.'

X.

Glenaveril groaned. ' Hush ! do not speak,' said she.
' In silence let these troubled deeps subside,
' And, O my friend, have confidence in me !
' Was I a clumsy nurse when I was tried ?
' And have I not well won the right to be
' Trusted by my dear patient ? Ah,' she sighed,
' The soul's ache, or the body's, which is worse ?
' Which most in need of an intelligent nurse ?

XI.

' 'Tis my pretension that I have the skill
' To comfort both. Indulge the vanity
' Which makes me think my friend needs nursing still,
' And that his best and safest nurse am I.
' Ne'er can your heart feel either well or ill,
' And mine be ignorant of the reason why.
' That were impossible ! and well I know
' What are the thoughts that agitate you now.

XII.

She said this in a tone convinced and grave ;
 And, for sole answer to its tender boast,
 Only a stifled sigh Glenaveril gave.

Her soothing words his sore heart's innermost
 Recesses stabbed like daggers. 'And I have,'
 She added, 'foremost in my little host
 'Of feminine vanities this pretension too,
 'That I am able to interpret you

XIII.

'Even to yourself. My heart's omniscient,
 'And sees in yours what you, yourself, ignore.'
 Glenaveril winced again. But on she went,
 'Dear sceptic, trust me, and protest no more !
 'If I forgive that gesture of dissent,
 'Tis that it flatters my superior lore,
 'And proves I know you (so it ought to be !)
 'Already better than you yet know me.

XIV.

'Another protest ! Still incredulous ! Well,'
 She added, 'then, dear, I will only say
 'You cannot know me yet, Emanuel,
 'Completely, as no doubt you will some day,
 'By instinct, without need of words to tell
 'Unspoken thoughts ; but that is just the way
 'That *I* know *you*. There's no reproach at all
 'In this distinction. 'Tis quite natural !

XV.

‘ If o’er you I have its advantage got,
‘ The cause is common. ’Tis that you’re a man,
‘ And I, dear, am a woman. It is not
‘ That, as a woman, I am wiser than
‘ The dullest woman when she loves. The lot
‘ Of all my sisters bounds the utmost span
‘ Of all my wishes; and in every mood
‘ I feel my kinship with my sisterhood.

XVI.

‘ To be a woman in the plainest sense
‘ Of that plain word is all I care to be,
‘ And all I can be. There’s no difference
‘ Between the nature of my sex and me.
‘ Being a woman, I make no pretence
‘ To be peculiar in the least degree.
‘ I name my sisters when myself I name :
‘ Past, present, future, we are all the same :

XVII.

‘ And not in my name only, but theirs too,
‘ Do I make this—what shall I call it, now ?
‘ Vaunt, or confession?—Judge, and name it, you !
‘ Superior as men are to us, I know,
‘ In all things else, in one thing women do
‘ Excel them,—I’ve a notion why, and how.
‘ In love, the youngest of us seems to start,
‘ Not with more knowledge of the human heart,

XVIII.

' But with a consciousness more intimate
 ' Of what love is,—an instinct truer than
 ' Mere observation, be it ne'er so great,
 ' Bestows upon the most experienced man.
 ' Experience, for love's profit, comes too late ;
 ' Love is alive ; experience dead ; it can
 ' Only begin where feeling ends ; and not
 ' By counting corpses is life's secret got ;

XIX.

"'Tis in our sex I find the reason why.
 ' Not quite the same are man-and-woman-kind.
 ' Love understands their difference perfectly,
 ' And turns, in men, to passion, as the wind
 ' Into the whirlwind turns, to move thereby
 ' Strong trees whose strength its softer breathings
 find
 ' No means to bend : but light, as willows move
 ' To faintest airs, women respond to love ;

XX.

' And so with us love deals quite otherwise.
 ' It breathes about us in our infancy ;
 ' Steals softly into us without surprise ;
 ' And doth, while we are little creatures, try
 ' By little stages to familiarize
 ' Our growing natures, imperceptibly,
 ' With its own growing influence. 'Tis thus
 ' Love, ere we know it, lives unguessed in us.

XXI.

‘ Strong is the whirlwind, but it cannot last,
‘ And woman’s love is woman’s life. The air
‘ Wherein life’s better part must needs be passed
‘ Is stormless : and, that it may linger there,
‘ Love, to the woman’s nature clinging fast,
‘ Turns into womanhood : lives everywhere
‘ About her life, each household portrait frames,
‘ And calls itself by all familiar names :

XXII.

‘ Unknown to her, it haunts from day to day
‘ The air she breathes, and vibrates in the tone
‘ Of all she thinks and feels ; she cannot stray
‘ Beyond its influence ; she and it are one.
‘ It is her sex, her *self* ! Turn where she may,
‘ Love to a woman’s life vouchsafes alone
‘ A goal which is her starting point as well,
‘ And if her Heaven it be not, ’tis her Hell !

XXIII.

‘ With love begins, and with it ends, her life,
‘ In this or that shape ; and ’tis but a name
‘ That changes, when the maid becomes a wife,
‘ The wife a mother. Thro’ all change the same,
‘ Whether fate be with it at peace or strife,
‘ The woman’s nature lasts. From love it came,
‘ To love it goes, and without love it dies.
‘ Its childhood’s plaything is its girlhood’s prize,

XXIV.

‘ And the girl’s prize the woman’s occupation ;
‘ Love to her youth gives charm, and to her age
‘ That charm remembered still gives consolation.
‘ Whate’er the objects that her thoughts engage,
‘ Love to them all imparts some inspiration.
‘ Lost in a sea that hath no anchorage
‘ Her thoughts would wander, and be thoughts no
 more,
‘ Did love not pilot them from shore to shore.

XXV.

‘ But all this happens so insensibly,
‘ And is so natural, that she knows it not :
‘ And when, at last, some unaccustomed sigh
‘ Reveals to her the love that fills her, what
‘ She then discovers, and is startled by,
‘ Is her own nature ; whereof love hath got
‘ Such full possession that it seems not hers
‘ But love’s—a gift, in short, which love confers.

XXVI.

‘ Love does not come to women, as to men ;
‘ It does not even come to us at all,
For it is in us from the first ; and, when
‘ Our love goes forth responsive to the call
‘ Of one whose coming it predicted, then
‘ It but fulfills its own prophetic
‘ Visions and trances ; and the loved one seems
‘ A being long familiar to love’s dreams.

XXVII.

' If I have thus the right to say I know
 ' Emanuel better than he yet knows me,
 ' Resent it not, dear ! 'Tis that long ago
 ' My heart divined the absent one, and he,
 ' The moment we two met, had nought to do
 ' But take the place that used, till then, to be
 ' Filled by his own dear image in my heart,
 ' Which recognised at once its counterpart.

XXVIII.

' Ah, yes ! and if in me, Emanuel,
 ' Your heart has hailed a revelation new,
 ' In you I have but known again (how well !)
 ' The destined dear one I already knew.
 ' To me, whose heart had been your oracle,
 ' Your presence only proved the oracle true,
 ' And I had nothing new to learn, except
 ' That love is in foreknowledge an adept.

XXIX.

' This is the difference between women and men :
 ' Love is, with you, a passion that gives rise
 ' To an ideal sentiment ; and when
 ' You love, love leads you to idealize
 ' The loved one ; we idealize first, and then
 ' We passionately love what satisfies
 ' All our ideal cravings. Passion thus,
 ' Just where it ends with you, begins with us,

XXX.

‘ In sentiment ! The moment when, at last,
‘ We really love, our love is wholly real :
‘ Our need of the ideal then is passed ;
‘ Love takes the place of it : and that ideal
‘ To you, in whom it has fulfilled its vast
‘ Predictions, as true love’s first hymenæal
‘ Gift, we surrender ; confident that you,
‘ Who have fulfilled, will best preserve it, too.

XXXI.

‘ Passion and sentiment would be but froth
‘ And fire, if either filled the heart alone ;
‘ And thus does love, to perfect its own growth,
‘ Unite two forces in a single one.
‘ ’Tis like the orange-tree, that puts forth both
‘ Blossom and fruit in the same season. None
‘ Have truly loved, whose loving lacked the spell
‘ Whereby true love performs this miracle.

XXXII.

‘ Without my faith in an ideal, how
‘ Could I, mine own Emanuel, have divined
‘ And known your nature as I know it now ?
‘ And you ? Ah, tell me, did not *you*, too, find
‘ That for the first time you began to know
‘ Your true self, your own inmost heart and mind,
‘ Only when you discovered them anew,
‘ Reading the first words that I wrote to you ?

XXXIII.

'Nay, but this question needs no fresh reply !
 'Long since, I know, your letter answered it.
 'How naturally, then, to-night, must I
 'Divine the thoughts of him by whom I sit,
 'When, tho' between us rolled the immensity
 'Of the vast ocean, love still gave me wit
 'To read his heart, and recognise so well
 'All that was in it, dear Emanuel !

XXXIV.

'What greater miracle than this could love
 'Perform to vindicate the fearless boast
 'Of its intuitive insight? Doth that move
 'Your wonder? Well then, your own heart accost
 'Yourself, Emanuel. Its reply will prove
 'That I can see what in its innermost
 'Recesses you would still conceal perforce,
 'For what I see there now is—a remorse !'

XXXV.

Up sprang Glenaveril with a cry of fear,
 And then with a faint sigh sank down again.
 'Ah,' she continued, 'Why so troubled? Dear,
 'Remorse condemns not, it but warns. In vain
 'We often strive to make our acts cohere
 'With our intents. And all such failures pain
 'The sensitive conscience most, when the intent
 'They leave defeated was most innocent.

XXXVI.

‘ If you, by chance, engaged your poor lost friend
‘ That pilgrimage to undertake,
‘ Which came, alas, to such a dreadful end,
‘ What wonder is it that your heart should ache
‘ For a result you neither did intend
‘ Nor could foresee? You suffer, for his sake,
‘ A causeless self-reproach that goes too far.
‘ Good heavens ! how unjust to us they are,

XXXVII.

‘ The sufferings our best impulses impose
‘ Upon us sometimes ! when, for all the pain
‘ Which they themselves inflict, they turn our foes,
‘ And false accusers ! To my heart ’tis plain
‘ That yours is suffering now from one of those
‘ False accusations ; but it cannot stain
‘ The conscience it disturbs. You writhe beneath
‘ A wrong impression that for that friend’s death,

XXXVIII.

‘ Whose life you vainly risked your own to save,
‘ You are responsible. Emanuel,
‘ No such responsibility you have !
‘ Of this be sure. Why should you shrink to tell
‘ The accusation whispered by that grave
‘ Against your heart, to one who knows so well
‘ The innocence of the accused ? Poor, dear,
‘ Imaginary culprit, have no fear !

XXXIX.

'Come, let Cordelia be your judge ! and she
' Shall pass a juster sentence than your own.
' Does not your past, my friend, belong to me
' Entirely, as your future ? Have I known
' Your thoughts, so well, and shall your actions be
' From mine own thoughts of them concealed alone ?
' Ah no ! To me, confession's first beginner,
' Confess thyself, and be absolved, dear sinner !'

XL.

Trembling in every limb Glenaveril rose.
His face was livid with a vast despair.
' Cordelia, this is horrible ! Heaven knows
' My punishment is more than I can bear !
' I have deceived you. O, that in the snows
' My wretched life, with his, had ended, ere
This hour !' he gasped, as at her feet he fell.
' Cordelia, I am not Emanuel !'

CANTO IV.

THE REVELATION.

I.

SUNK at Cordelia's feet, with that last cry,
Speechless Glenaveril remained. His head
Upon her knees had fallen heavily,
And there it rested, in a nerveless dread
Of the next moment; as one doomed to die,
And waiting but to hear his sentence read,
Clings to the block, and shudderingly covers
His face beneath the axe that o'er him hovers.

II.

His hands were stretched, in hopeless intercession
For mercy, to his executioner ;
But not a word acknowledged the confession
Which, from their quivering fibres torn by her,
Had left his heartstrings shattered. Its repression
Had long been stifling him, but deadlier
Was its release ; and crueller than all words
The dreadful silence of thought's broken chords.

III.

That silence gave him time to realize
Intensely what the end of it must be.
Each second of it magnified the size
Of the abyss he weltered in ; yet he
Dared not abridge its dumb eternities,
That, like the unreckoned waves of some great sea,
Rolled on and on, with ever-deepening stress,
To the dark realm of absolute nothingness.

IV.

His consciousness, deprived of power, became
A ghastly nightmare : and it seemed to him
That, fallen down a precipice, his frame,
To fragments shattered, lay there in a dim
Heap of destruction, helplessness, and shame ;
Whence, since his fall had numbed each broken
limb,
He feared the pang of being roused again
To life's intolerable sense of pain.

V.

And still no sound ! But the impending stroke
Fell not ; the loaded silence by degrees,
A mystic movement thrilled ; and he awoke
Slowly to a sensation of faint ease
From that dark burden, till the dead weight broke
Above him, as when timely rescue frees
From underneath an earthquake-stricken wall
The wretch its ruins buried in their fall.

VI.

He felt upon his hand another hand,
That drew it softly, with a tenderness
Its fluttered pulse could feebly understand,
To two warm lips, whose silent slow caress
Thro' all his being, like a blest command
Not to despair, went glowing : and then, ' Yes,'
A sweet voice whispered in low accents, mild
With almost motherly love, ' I knew it, child !'

VII.

A man, awakened suddenly, remains
Between his sleeping and his waking sense
Suspended for a moment, nor retains
In that dim moment the intelligence
Which either world, in different ways, explains
By different laws, on different evidence.
For those two states of consciousness exclude
Each other. Worlds that never yet were viewed

VIII.

At the same time, by the same eyes, they are.
Dissimilar themselves in everything,
Two separate senses, as dissimilar,
To dwell in either, we to each must bring ;
And even to understand the one, must far
Behind us leave the other, shattering
All links between, that each in turn may seem
Intelligible to us—Fact, and Dream.

IX.

Awaking is a shock that stupefies :

The right sense of the dream-world is confused
In presence of the real-world, that lies

Beyond the sphere to which that sense is used :
The right sense of the real-world denies

(As one whose faith in fact has been abused)
Resentfully the truth of the wild tale
Told by the dying dream without avail :

X.

And thus about two lies, or, it may be,

Two truths, which are irreconcilable,
These disputants, unable to agree,

Appeal to one who heeds not either well :
Stunned by this conflict of sensation, he

Doubts each discordant sense, and cannot tell
What to believe. The man whose head is laid
Upon the block, beneath the axe, hears said

XI.

The word of pardon : yet, while in his ears

That word is ringing, still he shrinks beneath
The axe that falls not, and still cowering fears

The blow that does not come. 'Twixt life and
death ;

Assailed by each ; and, to the clashing spheres

Of both, a passive obstacle ; with breath
And pulse suppressed, blank brain, and sightless eyes,
He rests inert, and neither lives nor dies.

XII.

'I knew it, child!' In those four words were spoken
Glenaveril's pardon—which effaced his crime ;
And with the crime, at the same joyful token,
Vanished the whole phantasmal pantomime
Which in the silence thus so sweetly broken
Had been performed. In one swift flash of time,
The judgment seat, the scaffold,—all were gone !
The victim rested there,—unchanged, alone.

XIII.

Cordelia doubtless understood how slow
And painful the recovery must be
From a dejection thus profound : and so,
Suffering Glenaveril's forehead on her knee
To rest, where he had flung it in his woe,
She sat quite still ; nor did she seek to free
Her prostrate prisoner from the fallen state
Wherein he lingered, still disconsolate.

XIV.

Only, she bent down lovingly above
The listless head that in her lap still lay ;
And he could feel her hushed hand's influence move
Soothingly, and its tender touches stray
Thro' his tossed curls : touches of such calm love
As guides a mother's hand to smoothe away
The trouble of the child that on her breast,
Lulled by those touches, sobs itself to rest.

XV.

And, as a mother whispers to her child,
To him she whispered,—little senseless things,
Which had no meaning save to appease the wild
Unrest, and calm the foolish flutterings,
Of a scared spirit still unreconciled
To the sweet cage it beat with broken wings.
Her low voice, musical with tenderness,
Had in it tones that more than words express.

XVI.

The maiden's motherly instinct, haply caught
From childhood's lingering influence, shed round
Her half-maternal task a fondness fraught
With such quaint tricks of fancy as abound
In what, to Age, associates the thought
Of Childhood's woes with the relief they found
In fairy tales; and, like a nursery rhyme,
The murmur rippled, 'Once upon a time—'

XVII.

Silence and sound, the darkness and the light,
The wavering moonbeam, and the whispering
bough,
The confidences interchanged that night,
The past and present interfused, the glow
Of a great solemn gladness, and the might
Of many memories,—all were moving now
Cordelia's spirit; and melodiously
Those magic words, in a delicious sigh,

XVIII.

Slid from her lips. But scarcely were they sighed,
Ere to their old familiar formula
The gates of Poësy rolled open wide ;
And all her past uprose in full array
Before her, as, to Oberon's horn, down slide
On moonbeams, and upstart from flower-bells, Fay
On Fay, till fast, in many a magic ring,
All Elfland throngs about its Faëry King.

XIX.

Without resistance, to the loveliness
Of that sweet vision she surrendered all
Her fancy ; and began, forthwith, to dress
In robes of faëry woof fantastical
The simple story of her girlhood. ' Yes,
' Listen ! ' she said. ' The tale I now recall
' Is true, and comes from a far-distant clime
' To tell thee all, love. Once upon a time

XX.

' There was a Princess, who was captive bound
' In an enchanted tower beside the sea :
' And, when that Princess from her tower looked
round,
' Nothing beneath her, nor above, saw she,
' But waves, and clouds, and birds. In their profound
' And rocky prison, panting to be free,
' The sea-waves heaved and tossed with ceaseless stir,
' But never could those waves come up to her ;

XXI.

'The clouds moved all day long across the sky,
'But down to her the clouds could never come ;
'And, 'twixt the waves and clouds, the birds went by,
'Flapping their light wings free and frolicsome,
'In æry circles soaring low and high .
'About the enchanted tower which was her home,
'And, with their little songs, as on they flew,
'Saluting her. She thought that she was, too,

XXII.

'A bird herself. And to the birds one day
"O sisters, take me with you far," she sighed,
"Away from here!" "Put forth thy wings!" said they.
'She spread her arms, and drooped them, and replied
"I cannot! Oh, for wings to fly away !
'"Wherefore to me alone are wings denied ?
'"And wherefore was I made the only one
"Of mine own kind, to live and die alone ?"

XXIII.

"Princess," a bird said to her, "thou art not
"Of all thy kind the only one. Far, far
"Away from here, there is a distant spot
"Beyond the sea, where other birds there are,
"Like thee. No visible wings those birds have got,
"Yet have I heard them many a time declare
"That by a single word to them is given
"A power that can uplift them into Heaven."

XXIV.

“What is that word? O tell it me!” said she.
“Tell it I can,” replied the little bird,
“But if I do, ’twill be no use to thee.”
“And why?” the Princess asked. “Because that
word
“Spoken by two of the same kind must be,
“Each to the other. I have often heard
“Those creatures interchanging it,” went on
“The little bird, “and this is how ’tis done :

XXV.

“The two that speak it hold each other’s hands,
“And gaze intently in each other’s eyes ;
“And then, as each one slowly understands
“What that word means, the form of both expands,
“And the face glows as with a glad surprise,
“And the voice trembles. And in all the lands
“I roam, there’s nothing I have seen that is
“More wonderful or lovelier than this.”

XXVI.

“Tell me the word!” “It is *I-love-thee*.” Then
“The Princess became pensive. But she muttered
“That word *I-love-thee* o’er and o’er again,
“And every time that to herself she uttered
“The sound of it, she sighed : and strangely, when
“She sighed, her little bosom heaved and fluttered.
“To none can I that sweet word breathe,” sighed she,
“And none will ever breathe it back to me !

XXVII.

“O little bird, that word, thou sayest, brings
“To those by whom ’tis spoken the right way
“The happy gift, the heavenly gift, of wings?”
“Nay, Princess,” said the little bird, “’Tis they
“Themselves that say it. In my wanderings
“I never yet have met them flying.” “Say,
“How is it, then, that they to Heaven can soar?”
“Ah, Princess,” said the little bird, “that’s more

XXVIII.

“Than I can tell thee! Heaven, for aught I know,
“Comes down to them. If that’s not the same thing,
“But little can it matter, anyhow,
“So long as one gets there.” And, echoing
“The little bird, the Princess murmured low,
“So long as one gets there! Can one word bring
“Heaven down to those who utter it? Dear bird,
“Tell me to whom, then, should one say this word?”

XXIX.

“That,” said the little bird, “thou first must learn
“Of Love.” “And where is Love?” The bird
replied
“A little everywhere. At every turn
“He is at hand, I think. I never tried
“Love’s secret hiding-places to discern,
“For I can call him wheresoe’er he hide.”
“And,” said the Princess, “when thy call is heard
“Doth Love come always?” “Always!” said the bird.

XXX.

‘ Then did the Princess clasp her hands, and “ O
 “ Dear bird, sweet bird,” she said, “ call Love this
 way !
 ‘ “ Tell him I wait for him—his will to know,
 “ His gifts to earn, his bidding to obey !
 ‘ “ And take to Love my prayer, that he may show
 “ Where I shall find my fellow-bird, and say
 ‘ “ *I-love-thee*, and *I-love-thee* hear once more,
 ‘ “ And so get wings that up to Heaven can soar ! ” ’

XXXI.

‘ Around the Princess lightly hovering,
 ‘ The bird said “ Sit down there, and list to me !
 ‘ “ This is the song that I to Love will sing.”
 ‘ Down sat the Princess near a myrtle tree
 ‘ That by the sea-girt wall was blossoming.
 ‘ Upon it perched the little bird, and he
 ‘ Out of his little breast poured forth this flood
 ‘ Of song, which well the Princess understood :

XXXII.

‘ “ Come hither, hither ! come from Heaven, O Love !
 “ Behold this maiden, young, and pure, and fair,
 ‘ “ Whose tender sighs have had the power to move
 “ A little bird that owes to thy sweet care
 ‘ “ His tiny nest in yonder myrtle grove,
 “ Which holds a bliss so great, could song declare
 ‘ “ The greatness of the bliss in that small nest,
 ‘ “ The song he sings would burst his happy breast !

XXXIII.

- “ O Love, thou lord of all delights ! so kind
“ To every little bird whose friend thou art,
“ Where can thy consecrating presence find
“ A sweeter home than in this maiden’s heart ?
“ The honeysuckle in the soft south wind,
“ My song hath rocked, my wing hath brushed
 apart
“ The pale rose-blossoms of the eglantine,
“ And searched the scented darkness of the pine

XXXIV.

- “ The solemn oak my sheltered sleep hath housed,
“ The myrtle spray beneath my steps hath danced,
“ In many a frolic bower have I caroused,
“ Thro’ many a glade of sunlit leafage glanced,
“ The silver Aprils my spring pipe hath roused,
“ The golden Junes my summer notes entranced,
“ But nowhere found I home more worthy thee
“ Than doth this child’s pure spirit seem to me.

XXXV.

- “ O hither, hither, Love, and here abide !
“ And I to thee shall all my debt have paid
“ For that sweet home thou didst for me provide,
“ Where dwells my mate within the myrtle shade.
“ O hither, hither, come from Heaven, and glide
“ Into the glowing heart which Heaven hath made
“ Thine earthly temple, god of birds and flowers,
“ And be this maiden thine, as thou art ours !

XXXVI.

‘“ O Love, what flower than this young life is fairer ?
 ‘“ What bird than this young spirit hath to woo thee
 ‘“ A purer note ? O Love, what bliss is rarer
 ‘“ Than thine shall be when hers is owed unto thee ?
 ‘“ O hither, hither, come from Heaven, and hear her,
 ‘“ Nor let her virgin sigh unanswered sue thee !
 ‘“ But give to her, as thou to us hast given,
 ‘“ The happiness of Heaven, of Heaven, of Heaven !”

XXXVII.

‘ The bird’s song quiveringly died away,
 ‘ Into that Heaven whose blessing it besought
 ‘ Upon the maiden listening to its lay.
 ‘ She, in a tender trance of dreamy thought,
 ‘ Knelt hushed and awed, like children when they pray,
 ‘ Her clasped hands pressed upon her bosom.
 Nought
 ‘ The tingling silence stirred, but her thrilled ear
 ‘ Heard a sweet whisper whispering, “ I am here ! ”

XXXVIII.

‘“ Ah,” sighed the Princess to herself, “ ’tis Love !
 ‘“ At last, then, is he come ? Thanks, thanks, dear
 bird ! ”
 ‘ But still she did not dare to speak or move,
 ‘ And to Love’s greeting answered not a word,
 ‘ Fearing lest Love should her delight reprove,
 ‘ And, in the silence, still Love’s voice she heard
 ‘ Repeating, “ Maiden, I am here. Of me,
 ‘“ What wilt thou ? ” Then “ Where art thou ? ”
 whispered she ;

XXXIX.

' For she saw no one. And the voice replied
 ' " Here, in thy heart ! nor canst thou see my face
 ' " Save thro' another's eyes." " But ah," she sighed,
 ' " That other, where is he ? I do not trace
 ' " His presence here. How shall I find him ? Wide
 ' " And big the world is. But from this sad place
 ' " I cannot stir. I have no wings." " Do thou
 ' " Send him a message," Love's voice answered.
 ' " How ?"

XL.

' " Confide it to the little bird, whose flight
 ' " I then will guide." " But he for whom 'tis
 ' meant,
 ' " Will he believe and answer it aright,
 ' " Knowing not her whose heart the message sent ?"
 ' " If thou," said Love, " tho' he be out of sight,
 ' " Thyself canst love him thus, be thou content !
 ' " So, if he loves at all, will he love thee.
 ' " Doubt loves not, and love doubts not. Trust in me !"

XLI.

' So from that hour, confiding in its tone,
 ' The Princess to the voice of Love gave heed,
 ' And all her heart yearned to the absent one.
 ' Then, in the earth she planted one small seed ;
 ' The seed took root, and grew, and still grew on ;
 ' And, as from earth its tender stalk it freed,
 ' It rose, and rose, and strengthening, grew and grew,
 ' And every day put forth a blossom new.

XLII.

“This little seed,” the Captive Princess said,
“Hath grown up, neither seeing, nor yet knowing,
“In confidence complete. Its tender head
“So feeble was, that the wind’s lightest blowing
“Could lay it prostrate on its earthy bed ;
“Yet has earth been uplifted by its growing.
“What shame it were to me, then, did I want
“The trust that gave such strength to this weak plant !

XLIII.

“Grow on, dear seed, that Love in me hath sown !
“Fast-rooted in my heart, from hour to hour,
“Grow stronger, stronger, till thou art full blown,
“And blossom, blossom sweet, with flower on
flower !”
“And when the Princess saw her seedling grown
“To a great plant, and blushing with its dower
“Of purple blossoms in a palpitant glow,
“Now,” said the maiden to herself, “I know

XLIV.

“Him who was born to love me, just as well
“As if we had grown up together. See,
“Thus looks my lover, as my heart can tell !
“Filled with the fulness of my love is he,
“Sweet with the sweetness of my thoughts, that dwell
“Upon him daily, and, like this fair tree,
“All covered with the blossoms of my youth,
“And glowing with the warmth of his own truth !”

XLV.

' Then she recalled the little bird, and cried
 ' " Fill here, sweet bird, thy love-song to the brim !
' " Then, fly away across the ocean wide,
 ' " Away, away, into the distance dim !
' " And when thou findest, on the other side,
 ' " Of its soul-separating waters, him
' " Who doth this plant resemble, tell him thou
' " That I have sent thee. He thy voice will know,

XLVI.

' " And what thou sayest he will understand.
 ' " Say to him that I wait for him." Away
' The little bird flew over sea and land,
 ' And wandered far and wide. At last, one day,
' The bird discovered, sitting hand in hand,
 ' And side by side, beneath the linden spray,
' In converse, two young Princes. Then, thought he,
' " One of these two the one she waits may be ;

XLVII.

' " But so alike they are, that who can tell
 ' " Which one it is? That they, themselves, shall
 prove !
' " The one that, hearing, understands me well,
 ' " Must be the true one." On the boughs above
' The bird alighted, and began to swell
 ' His little throat, and sing the hymn which Love
' Had taught him. Listening all beatified,
' " O hearken ! " one of the young Princes cried,

XLVIII.

- “ Was ever song so heavenly sweet as this ?
 “ With what enchantment doth it charm the ear ! ”
 “ A parrot,” said the other one, “ it is,
 “ That must have slipped its cage, and wandered
 here
 “ From the Seraglio, where these fooleries
 “ The creature, doubtless, learned ; and it is clear
 “ That out of season, understanding nought,
 “ It now repeats the nonsense it was taught.”

XLIX.

- “ No ! ” cried the first, “ I recognise that song,
 “ For I have heard it in my dreams before !
 “ And to its melody my whole life long
 “ Fain would I listen. Down to my heart’s core,
 “ Responsive to it all my pulses throng.
 “ Sing on, sweet bird ! sing thus, for evermore ! ”
 ‘ Lightly he rose, and all along the wood
 ‘ Followed the bird, whose song he understood.

L.

- ‘ Still singing all the way, from tree to tree
 ‘ The bird flew on before, until at last
 ‘ It reached the leafless shore of the great sea.
 ‘ Its flight the listening Prince had followed fast ;
 ‘ And, when across the rolling waters, he
 ‘ Beheld the bird fly home, away he cast
 ‘ His princely plume, away his golden crown
 ‘ He tossed, and flung his jewelled mantle down.

LI.

“Take them who will,” he cried, “these hindrances
“To my desire !” and, naked, plunged among
‘The billowed deeps that, swoll’n with the full stress
‘Of the strong sea, their floods about him flung ;
‘Above, to guide him thro’ that wilderness
‘Of waters, forward flew, and, flying, sung
‘The little bird ; and towards an unseen shore
‘He swam, and swam, until he knew no more.

LII.

‘One morn, out of a cloud, the Princess heard
‘The well-known voice of her winged messenger ;
‘And, from a dark sky, the storm-beaten bird,
‘Wailing along the wild wind, cried to her,
“Princess, thy mandate hath been ministered,
“And answered. Now, thy promised gift confer !
“For he, whom thou didst call, is here ; but he
“Hath, in his coming, suffered sorely. See !”

LIII.

‘The Princess, hearing this, went forth, and found
‘Him who had understood her message lying
‘All bruised and torn, and bleeding, on the ground,
‘Insensible. She stooped above him, sighing ;
‘And kissed his poor pale lips ; and bathed and bound
‘His bleeding wounds. And in her arms the dying
‘Prince, who for her had risked his life, regained it ;
‘But understood not how, till she explained it.

LIV.

“Welcome, beloved!” she cried, “the bird art thou
“Whose coming I have waited all this while!
“The wings I wanted, thou hast brought me now;
“Hence! let us fly away from this sad isle!
“For thou, dear fellow-bird, wilt teach me how
“To use the freedom thy reviving smile
“To my no-longer-captived life hath given,
“Nay, earth is, in thy smile, already Heaven!”

LV.

‘Then, when the Prince, who was but half awake,
‘Heard, without understanding, what she said,
‘He feared that all had been some sad mistake,
‘And that the little bird had disobeyed
‘The mandate given him for another’s sake;
‘Or that he had that little bird betrayed,
‘By claiming what for him was never meant—
‘The confident message to that other sent.

LVI.

‘He dared not answer, dared not own the fear
‘That tortured him. This error to retrieve
‘He wished, but knew not how. He could not bear
‘Either to disappoint, or to deceive,
‘The trusting heart that was to his so dear;
‘So he was silent, and began to heave
‘Innumerable miserable sighs.
‘The Princess watched him with compassionate eyes,

LVII.

‘That swam with tears of perfect happiness.
‘The conflict in that heart she loved so well
‘Convinced her, by its innocent distress,
‘How she herself was loved. No words can tell
‘What joy this gave her. But canst *thou* not guess?
‘With thankfulness and bliss unspeakable,
‘In both her hands she took his cherished head,
‘And drew it to her—as I thine—and said,

LVIII.

“What care I, now, for all the birds in heaven,
“And all their wings? ’Tis thou, and thou alone,
“To whom the message of my heart was given,
“For thou, beloved, hast been the only one
“To understand it, or to hear it even!
“Thou art my Prince, who hast thy princely
 throne,
“For me renounced. Thy love my freedom brings,
“And thou art here! I have no need of wings;

LIX.

“For now, I have no wish to fly away.
“This place is Heaven while thou art by me still!
“And where thou stayest, I with thee will stay,
“For where thou art, there Heaven my soul doth
 fill!
“’Tis thee I love! and, as I love to-day,
“I loved thee ever, and forever will!
“Thou art my life, and my life’s lord thou art!
“So, for thy kingdom lost, take all my heart!”

LX.

These words fell, one by one, distinctly, slowly,
Upon Glenaveril's listening soul, which drew
Into its depths of softened melancholy
Their blissful meaning, as sweet drops of dew,
Filled with the essences of moments holy
From stars in summer heavens, are drawn into
A thirsty land whose stricken flowers revive,
Drinking heart-deep the balmy boon they give.

LXI.

And, sweeter than the sweets of all the South,
Cordelia's lips on his were breathing warm!
And long and deep on her delicious mouth
His own, unsated, quaffed without alarm
The cup divine, Love filled with life and youth;
That cup, which with an ever-deepening charm
Love fills forever for his own sweet sake,
For love's a thirst which loving cannot slake.

LXII.

And full with sweetness, ever sweeter growing,
That cup shall be, so long as here below
The fount of sorrows and of tears is flowing;
So long as human life for human woe
Craves human sympathy,—its sweets bestowing
On all who to its source for solace go;
For all the sufferings upon earth but prove
The strength of their sublime consoler, Love!

CANTO V.

A RIDE ON A HOBBY-HORSE.

I.

MEANWHILE, within the Villa Eckermann,
The other members of the family were
Now clustering all their reassembled clan
Around the tea-urn: and, no sooner there
Did Ivor, with Cordelia, join them, than
Edelrath's glance his pupil's radiant air
Completely satisfied that there was now
No shadow of a cloud between the two.

II.

Whereat he whispered to Glenaveril
'*Fiat voluntas tua!* For I see
'*My will is done!*' And Ivor answered, still
Glowing with grateful happiness, as he
Embraced the hand of his betrothed, 'Thy will,
'And hers, and mine, are all the same. We three
'Have but one will now, and 'tis Heaven's as well.
'Our wills are one and indivisible!'

III.

So audibly he said this, that his host,
 By chance the catchword overhearing, cried
 Across the table, 'That's a foolish boast !
 ' All the republics which, in turn, have tried
 ' To make it a reality, have lost
 ' Their labour, and their liberty beside ;
 ' Defining by it only despotism,
 ' Which always in the end provokes a schism.

IV.

' Had they assumed for their device instead
 ' *Each for his own part, and the whole for none,*
 ' That would have been a less discredited
 ' And truer motto.' ' Bless my soul ! from one
 ' Who is,' said Edelrath, ' not born and bred,
 ' But by his own deliberate deed alone,
 ' (Which, I presume, his preference dictates)
 ' A citizen of the United States,

V.

' That's a hard saying, surely ?' ' Go, and see !'
 Rejoined Herr Jonathan. ' Experience
 ' Is quite a different thing from theory,
 ' And to the latter I make no pretence.
 ' But each Republic is a Company
 ' Of Shareholders, for working that immense
 ' Gold mine, the Public Pocket. And they are
 ' All, in the main, exactly similar ;

VI.

Each is conducted by a President

- ‘ And Council, who, in all things, great or small,
 ‘ Are suffered, for a while, to represent
 ‘ The omnipotence of what its courtiers call
 ‘ (For, sir, *Vox Populi*’s omnipotent,
 ‘ Tho’ not, alas, infallible at all !)
 ‘ The Grace of Universal Suffrage. Ay,
 ‘ That’s an Omnipotent Fallibility !

VII.

- ‘ And they enormous dividends divide,
 ‘ If they manipulate with fair success
 ‘ A capital, that can’t be verified,
 ‘ Its greater portion being more or less
 ‘ Imaginary. Sir, I say, with pride,
 ‘ I have had plenty of experiences
 ‘ Of how to manage capital in trade,
 ‘ And how vast profits may by those be made

VIII.

- ‘ Who guess in time what sort of things will suit
 ‘ The public taste. It matters not a pin
 ‘ Whether the goods be cochineal and jute,
 ‘ Or votes and measures, that you traffic in ;
 ‘ The trick’s the same. You’ve simply to compute
 ‘ Where public wants are likely to begin,
 ‘ And how to satisfy them in the way
 ‘ Most sure to make your speculation pay.

IX.

'Moreover, I'm a real republican,
 'Since choice it is, not chance, that I obey,
 'Between ourselves,' continued Jonathan,
 'All born republicans, the truth to say,
 'Are but miscarried monarchists.' 'O man
 'Of paradoxes!' cried Glenaveril, 'pray,
 'In that case, since 'tis such an easy thing,
 'Why do they never choose themselves a king?'

X.

'Because 'tis *not*,' he answered with a sigh,
 'An easy thing, but an impossible!
 'Kings are not chosen. That's the reason why.
 'The President of a Republic?—well,
 'That's what a man *becomes*, and all who try
 'May hope to be, without a miracle;
 'But King's are *born*.' Glenaveril laughed, 'I see!
 'And Brillat Savarin appears to me

XI.

'In a new light.' 'Who's he?' exclaimed his host,
 But on, not pausing for reply, he went,
 'As a republican, mine uttermost
 'I certainly would spare not to prevent,
 'In a republic, even at any cost,
 'Such a mistake as the establishment
 'Of monarchy. Yet still, one may deplore
 'Not finding it established there before;

XII.

'For instance, every father must, no doubt,
 'Wish that his son may have the grace to get
 'Thro' youth's temptations, charms, and snares,
 without
 'Youth's follies, faults, and peccadillos ; yet,
 'Tho' he'd not have Young Hopeful go about
 'Sowing wild oats, 'tis not without regret
 'That he would see the boy to manhood grown
 'With every one of his wild oats unsown.'

XIII.

Glenaveril, whose mind, now all at ease,
 Began to find in Jonathan's orations
 A charm occasioned by the contrast these
 Presented to the vehement sensations
 Thro' which, erewhile, beneath the moonlit trees
 He had been passing, laughed 'Your illustrations,
 'Herr Jonathan, are charming! You employ,
 'However, in defence of monarchy,

XIV.

'A method which, were I a king, I know,
 'Would certainly induce me to exclaim
 "'*Heaven save me from my friends!*'" 'That may be so,
 'But then, the friends of kings might say the same,'
 Growled Jonathan, 'for nothing can undo
 'The cause of monarchy, nor put to shame
 'Its true friends, more completely than the things
 'Done to destroy its principle by kings ;

XV.

' When kings, for instance, stoop to take, on vile
 ' Conditions, as a craved almsgiving, thrown
 ' By the red mob to them, and all the while
 ' Dripping with blood and mud, a brother's crown ;
 ' Or slyly aid with fratricidal guile,
 ' The wreck of thrones as royal as their own !
 ' When one king traffics in another's fall,
 ' To serve his own, he hurts the cause of all !

XVI.

' Kings never can be made : and therefore they
 ' Ought never to be *unmade*. 'Tis, alas,
 ' Just the reverse of this that every day
 ' Happens around us now. And, as it was
 ' Said of some combat, that it died away
 ' For want of combatants, 'twill come to pass,
 ' And be recorded amongst ancient things,
 ' That kingdoms died away for want of kings.'

XVII.

' If all republicans were of your way
 ' Of thinking, we,' said Ivor, ' might transact
 ' An interchange of paradox, and say
 ' " Republics are, by reason of the fact
 ' " That there are no republicans." ' ' You may
 ' Say it at once, 'tis nearly the exact
 ' Truth of the matter,' Jonathan replied.
 ' What's the Republic? I have often tried

XVIII.

‘To find out what’s the abstract principle
‘Of which it is the concrete incarnation ;
‘And this is all about it I can tell
‘For certain—the Republic’s a negation.
‘Of every other state in which men dwell,
‘Or form, and method of administration,
‘It is the negative. And more than this,
‘Who can with certainty affirm it is ?

XIX.

‘When it pretends to be Fraternal Love,
‘Equality, Peace, Virtue, Heaven knows what,
‘’Twere easy, nine times out of ten, to prove
‘That every one of these things it is not.
‘The only thing you can be certain of,
‘For of nought else can certain proof be got,
‘Is that it is not Monarchy, of course :
‘And in that fact lies the Republic’s force.

XX.

‘For there are hundreds, thousands, one might say
‘The vast majority of all mankind,
‘Whom that negation flatters, in the way
‘That’s most congenial to the vulgar mind.
‘“Since kings we cannot be ourselves,” say they,
‘“The next best thing to being kings we find
‘“In being, at least, able to decree
‘“That nobody at all a king shall be.”

XXI.

' And this consolatory power we know
 ' That the Republic on each citizen
 ' Belonging to it does, in fact, bestow.
 ' A President's authority such men
 ' Resent not, because each, tho' ne'er so low,
 ' Obscure or sordid be his native den,
 ' Is flattered by the thought that he, too, may
 ' Himself become a President some day.

XXII.

" "I could be, or I might be—this, or that!"
 ' And "what I'm not, I might have been, in short,
 " "If only that or this, no matter what,
 ' "Were otherwise!" Reflections of this sort
 ' (For the Subjunctive Mood's an autocrat)
 ' Not only constitute the main support
 ' Of each republic, but, as you will find,
 ' Command the world, and govern all mankind.

XXIII.

" "I'm but a private soldier still, no doubt,"
 ' Says to himself the veteran pensioner
 ' As on his wooden leg he limps about,
 ' "But, then *I might have been* Field Officer!"
 ' 'Tis this Subjunctive that once put to rout
 ' The hosts of Europe, did on France confer
 ' Her *Grande Armée*, and to Napoleon gave
 ' The world that army helped him to enslave.

XXIV.

“Sir, not a farthing in the world have I!”
‘Exclaims the man who begs five pounds of you,
“I lost my fortune in the bankruptcy
“Of X. Y. Z. My wife is starving too.”
‘But then, with a compensatory sigh,
‘He whispers to himself, “*I might*, ’tis true,
“*Have been* a millionaire!” And this, of course,
‘Is the Subjunctive that keeps up the Bourse.

XXV.

“I never rise till nearly noon,” remarks
‘A fine young gentleman. “I always go
“Late to my office : in the clubs and parks
“I pass my afternoons : and I bestow
“No time on study, because office-clerks
‘“And junior diplomats ought not to know
“More than by their official heads is known,
“And too much zeal might only keep me down :

XXVI.

“I find it quite enough to be aware
“That the best hams, and the best treaties too,
“Come from Westphalia ; and I take care
“Always in what I write to make a few
“Misspellings—faults on the right side they are—
“Because I’ve heard the Duc de Richelieu
“Cared not how his orthography might vary,
“Since that, he said, concerned his secretary :

XXVII.

““ If international law a little bit
 ““ I’ve studied, it is solely for the sake
 ““ Of copying dispatches which are writ
 ““ With the design, so far as I can make
 ““ Their meaning out, of just evading it :
 ““ I bet upon most questions, and I’d take
 ““ Long odds that from Unpaid Attaché to
 ““ Illpaid Attaché, whatsoe’er I do,

XXVIII.

““ I have but little chance to rise : and yet
 ““ I’m satisfied with my position,—*for*
 ““ *I might* some day, *if* I am lucky, get
 ““ Myself appointed an Ambassador !”
 ‘ This last Subjunctive gives the State a set
 ‘ Of brilliant youths (a decorative store
 ‘ Of spruce young men who serve it without pay)
 ‘ And wastes their lives in the most harmless way.’

XXIX.

‘ And I,’ here interposed Frau Eckermann,
 ‘ Am married to a man who loves, I see,
 ‘ To talk, and talk, as long as talk he can :
 ‘ But then *I might*, you know,’ continued she,
 ‘ Have married quite another sort of man,
 ‘ Who would have helped me to pass round the tea,
 ‘ And served his guests, and done what he was told,
 ‘ And drunk his own tea, too, before ’twas cold !’

XXX.

‘Halt there!’ exclaimed the merchant, rubicund
 With pleasure, as, above her stooping low,
 About his wife’s still comely waist, a fond
 Caressing arm he passed, ‘I don’t allow
 ‘Even the Subjunctive Mood to go beyond
 ‘Its proper sphere (a big one anyhow!)
 ‘And meddle with domestic matters. Here
 ‘The place is fully occupied, my dear,

XXXI.

‘By the Imperative Mood—and, let me add,
 ‘Pluperfect Tense! Come then, and take thy tea,
 ‘Emanuel, and sit down there, my lad,
 ‘Beside Cor— Where the dickens, then, is she?
 ‘I thought I saw her here just now. I had
 ‘A word to say to her. And the Professor? He
 ‘Was sitting yonder but a minute ago,
 ‘And arguing the point with me, I know.’

XXXII.

‘Arguing!’ Cried Frau Eckermann. ‘Well, well,
 ‘He made but a poor fight of it, that’s true!
 ‘Silenced *his* batteries, Emanuel,
 ‘At the first shot! Dealt him his Waterloo!
 ‘The victory was incontestable!
 ‘And so he’s fled? and abdicated, too!
 ‘Amazing!’ Said Frau Eckermann again,
 ‘My dear, whenever your political vein

XXXIII.

'Is running, and you have the luck to find
'A listener as complacent as our dear
'Good Herr Emanuel, you are so blind
'And deaf that, if just then your own cashier
'Should diabolically be inclined
'To steal the safe, and with it disappear,
'I don't believe you'd ever notice it.'
'Faith!' laughed her husband, 'there I'm fairly hit!

XXXIV.

'Nothing is more extraordinary than
'The pleasure everybody takes, no doubt,
'(At least I needs must own,' sighed Eckermann,
'I do myself) in holding forth about
'What no one understands. But, wife, where can
'Cordelia be? Go, child, and find her out,
'And tell her that tea's waiting! And our guest,
'Look for him, too, and—' 'He is gone to rest;

XXXV.

'Tis half-an-hour ago,' triumphantly
His wife said, smiling, 'that he went away
'To smoke his pipe. He lacks not company;
'Cordelia's with him. And Cordelia
'Has taken up his tea to him.' 'Ay, ay,'
Sighed Jonathan, 'he's had a trying day!
'I trust that he has all he wants up there.
'Well, we must leave him in Cordelia's care.

XXXVI.

'I'm sorry, tho'! I should have liked to hear
'His views upon the social influence
'Of the Subjunctive Mood. I rather fear
'That you and I are, in a certain sense,
'Herr Doctor—for you *are*, I think, my dear
'Emanuel, a doctor?' 'No offence,'
Glenaveril laughed 'I'm *not* a doctor, *but*
'I *might*, you know, *have been* one, *if—*' 'Tut! tut!

XXXVII.

'My good Sir, the Subjunctive Mood is not
'A thing to joke about. It is, indeed,
'More serious, I conceive, than your whole lot
'Of Ologies and Onomies. Just heed
'What I'm about to say—' And, waxing hot,
The incorrigible disputant with speed
Went on, his hand on Ivor's shoulder laying,
'Now, the Subjunctive Mood, as I was saying--

BOOK THE SIXTH.

CORDELIA.

CANTO I.—LOVE'S METAMORPHOSES.

CANTO II.—THE TEACHER TAUGHT.

CANTO III.—THE LAST METAMORPHOSIS.

CANTO IV.—DAWN.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

CANTO I.

LOVE'S METAMORPHOSES.

I.

THE maiden and her youngest friend, the old man,
Were pacing with slow steps the chamber, where
Erewhile the Royalist-Republican
Had, to his guest's confusion and despair,
So eagerly developed his great plan
For reëstablishing, about a pair
As blest as our first parents ere Cain's birth,
All the delights of Paradise on earth.

II.

Within the Scholar's arm Cordelia
Had wound her own ; and, clasping over it
Her two hands in the most caressing way,
About that favoured arm of his she knit
The prettiest Gordian knot that could delay
A conqueror, and induce him to admit
All sorts of reasons why he should not try
A violent solution of its tie.

III.

Her attitude, which the Subjunctive Mood
 Replaced by a conjunction, plainly meant
 That the Conditional (altho,' for good
 Or ill, it claims to be omnipotent
 O'er human intercourse) was understood
 To be dethroned by mutual consent
 In this completely-confidential stage
 Of good relations between Youth and Age.

IV.

'I now have given you,' to his young ally
 Said Edelrath, 'a key that's sure to fit
 'The few locks of this long-shut mystery
 'Not yet unfastened by your own fine wit.
 'Tho' you, its innocentest victim, I
 'Feared to see fall a sacrifice to it,
 'Glenaveril's sufferings worse than yours have proved,
 'And that is just. He wronged you, tho' he loved.

V.

'But you, Cordelia, have not indicated
 'The Ariadne from whose hand you got
 'The clue that safe thro' such an iron-gated
 'Death-haunted labyrinth led you. Was it not
 'Your Guardian's correspondents (for he stated
 'That he had correspondents on the spot—
 'I mean, at Heidelberg) who first disclosed
 'Cause for—' But here Cordelia interposed ;

VI.

'Dear, excellent Jonathan!' she laughed, 'ill able
'To hold, unbroken, Ariadne's thread,
'Unless she spun it thick as a ship's cable,
'His hands would be! The Minotaur might lead
'A life still safe and undiscoverable,
'If Jonathan were Theseus. No,' she said,
'No need of art or artifice had I
'To penetrate Glenaveril's mystery ;

VII.

'Its author put into my hands the clue,
'Himself, unconsciously, against his will.'
'I understand,' said Edelrath. "'Tis true,
'Nature hath given to dear Glenaveril
'An air of such distinction, that in you,
'Whose eye reads character with natural skill,
'His high-bred aspect failed not to awaken
'Suspensions of the truth'—'Again mistaken,'

VIII.

Replied Cordelia. 'No, I saw no more,
'When first I saw him, than his eyes. Those two
'Letters, wherein we both had met before,
'Then changed themselves into two looks. And, tho'
'So brief, so silent, and so swiftly o'er,
'That second meeting, he, who was, you know,
'Assured, as well he might be till that day,
'That I had never left America,

IX.

‘ Knew me the moment that we met. Since then,
‘ He oft has told me so. But, as for me,
‘ Who there had come to seek Emanuel, when
‘ I saw him, no surmise had I that he
‘ Was not the man I sought. I felt again,
‘ Even more strongly than before, that we
‘ Were born to understand each other well;
‘ Yet doubted not he was Emanuel.

X.

‘ Thrice blessed be the generous inspiration
‘ That prompted Ivor to insist upon
‘ An interchange of title, name, and station,
‘ Which Fate has since confirmed! For I anon
‘ Owed to this second error my salvation
‘ From the deception of the previous one;
‘ And, thanks to it, Emanuel’s name to me
‘ Became not, what it else had proved to be,

XI.

‘ The fatal sail whose sable hue deceived
‘ The sire of Theseus. ’Twas by slow degrees
‘ My heart its knowledge of the truth achieved;
‘ And the slow pace of its discoveries
‘ The shock of their collective force relieved,
‘ When, wincing underneath the weight of these
‘ Revealed deceits, where’er I turned I found
‘ My footstep slipping upon loosened ground.

XII.

' The utterances of delirium
' In this resemble those of poësy—
' That both of them impetuously come,
' And neither of them pauses to employ
' Explanatory phrases. Travelling from
' A greater distance—where their sources lie
' In the remoter deeps of feeling—each
' Says less, and yet means more, than common speech :

XIII.

' Involuntary cries, whose fitful strain
' Is intermittent as the news they bear,
' They reach us from an unseen battle plain
' With intimations of the strife which there
' Is going on. And far that vexed domain
' Of nature lies beyond our vision, where,
' Save for such intimations, we know nought
' About the battle that is being fought.

XIV.

' All those who watch the fever of the mind,
' Or body, with indifferent ears and eyes,
' Can only in its fervid language find
' An incoherent chaos of wild cries :
' Poets and sick men need the self-same kind
' Of divination ; for their speech implies
' More than it says, and is but hints dispersed ;
' To understand them, you must love them first.

XV.

‘ What struck me most, as night by night I sat,
‘ To the long wild delirious wanderings
‘ Of my poor patient listening hushed, was that
‘ Emanuel’s name and mine, like rival kings,
‘ The whole confusion seemed to dominate
‘ In different ways. All dreadful thoughts and
things
‘ One image summoned, and the other banished,
‘ As each in turn the tumult crossed and vanished.

XVI.

‘ The voice that called upon Emanuel
‘ Was full of terror, as of tenderness
‘ The voice that called Cordelia. I knew well
‘ Whence came the last. And what tearful bliss
‘ I heard that troubled heart the healing spell
‘ Of mine thus all unconsciously confess
‘ Upon eternity’s dim brink ! But whence
‘ Its other cry’s importunate vehemence ?

XVII.

‘ Why should he call himself by his own name ?
‘ Why should he call himself at all ? And why
‘ Seemed it as if this invocation came
‘ Out of the depths of some great agony ?
‘ Nobody calls himself (I mused) the same
‘ Familiar word that others call him by :
‘ And why, indeed, should anybody call
‘ Himself by any vocative at all ?

XVIII.

' Since a man's self's the only thing a man
' Cannot get rid of, try the most he may,
' What can (I thought), be more unnatural than
' That any man to his own self should say
' "Come hither"? Easier understand I can
' That he should to himself say "go away!"
' Especially if to himself he were
' An object of such horror or despair.

XIX.

' This was a flash of lightning, but it lit
' Abysmal darkness only. 'Tis not you,
' Whose erudition hath ransacked that pit,
' The Past, wherein death stores, to keep it true,
' The truth of life, whose treasure bit by bit
' Research extracts, and analyses too,—
' It is not you, who need be told what I
' Then found—that there is no reality

XX.

' In Fiction's academic artifice,
' When it permits the tragedy's fifth act
' To employ delirious sleep as a device
' Of conscience, for disclosing some dark fact
' In utterance explicit and precise.
' Such sleep's real utterance is a cataract
' Of incoherent vehemences—moans,
' And sobs, and sighs, and inarticulate tones!

XXI.

‘But, ah! when seated by the sufferer’s bed
‘Brooding on all his movements with an eye
‘That care, and vigil long, have rimmed with red,
‘Seizing the tear that turns into a sigh,
‘And watching lips that move with words unsaid,
‘You take your own part in the tragedy,
‘Then will you know the patient better than
‘You otherwise could ever know the man!

XXII.

‘We say of those who at death’s door have been,
‘When they recover, that they were far gone :
‘And that is true. Dim regions lie between
‘The border lands of Life and Death, and zone
‘The distant frontiers of a world unseen ;
‘The vexed and wandering spirits that alone
‘Those regions roam, whence rarely they return,
‘Can only send across their cloudy bourne

XXIII.

‘Brief, broken, agitated messages,
‘Which in their passage often go astray ;
‘And we, to understand such news, must guess
‘From gap to gap our hesitating way.
‘Yet what these cries unconsciously confess
‘Is full of meaning ; and I now can say
‘That there’s in Ivor’s character no fold
‘Which doth from me one hidden thought withhold.

XXIV.

' I know him better than himself he knows ;
' And both his best and worst, love equally.
' A Tree of Knowledge in Love's Eden grows.
' The fruit Eve plucked, whate'er she lost thereby,
' Gave her, at least, the power to share his woes
' Who with her tasted it. Her child am I,
' And, whatsoe'er it cost me, I would still
' Take, with love's good unstinted, all its ill.

XXV.

' Some personal interest must the listener move
' To interpret right delirium's ravings drear ;
' But, let the sufferer be the man you love,
' And then from deep to deep the call grows clear.
' The stricken one whose bed I bent above
' Was not Emanuel. From the pain and fear
' Emanuel's name evoked, this fact stood out
' Beyond the possibility of doubt.

XXVI.

' But then, if not Emanuel, who was he ?
' He could but be one other ; and I knew
' That, being not Emanuel, he must be
' Emanuel's friend, the English Noble, who,
' Until that drear discovery, had to me
' Been but a name and nothing more. The two
' Must have changed names and characters. But why ?
' What was the meaning of this travesty ?

XXVII.

‘ Was it caprice, or was it accident ?
‘ That such a substitution had dictated
‘ The cherished answer to my letter sent
‘ Did not at first occur to me. Love dated
‘ Remembrance from that last supreme event,
‘ Our second meeting, which to looks translated
‘ All by the pen first told—that I was loved.
‘ How could the answer’s truth be better proved ?

XXVIII.

‘ Moreover, all the care the sick man’s state
‘ Exacted every moment at my hands,
‘ Left to my thoughts no time to meditate
‘ On past or future, until such demands
‘ Became less constant and importunate.
‘ To smooth the pillows, change the blood-soaked
bands,
‘ And minister the potions to his pain,
‘ Dreading lest all I did be all in vain ;

XXIX.

‘ These tasks, and the attention they required,
‘ My thoughts of him by day and night possessed ;
‘ And, with these tasks, the interest each inspired
‘ Drew me towards him ; and the woman’s zest
‘ In nursing, thus insensibly acquired,
‘ Coöperated with that interest
‘ To silence all suspicions that denied
‘ My title to be sitting at his side.

XXX.

' But when I fully realized at last
' That the poor sufferer, I still watched above,
' Was not the man to whom my life's whole past
' Had vowed its future—my predestined love,
' The son of her to whom my father's vast
' Devotion now all fruitless seemed to prove,
' And the dear faith it to my love had given,
' A faith defeated and insulted even ;

XXXI.

' Then—then—I own, the terror of that thought
' Changed love itself to an immense dismay.
' Such pain and shame the revelation wrought,
' That my first instinct was to shrink away,
' Anywhere—from myself—from him—from aught
' That yet remained of all which till that day
' Had been my universe ; tho' refuge none
' Was left me. God himself from Heaven seemed gone.

XXXII.

' The one sensation uppermost in me
' Was, so to speak, the wreck of all sensation.
' Conscious, in some vague way, I seemed to be ;
' But conscious only of annihilation.
' Had I not been o'erwhelmed so utterly
' Beneath the shelter of its indignation
' I might, perhaps, have then contrived to place
' Love's cowardice, and bury my disgrace

XXXIII.

‘ No matter where, if only out of sight,
‘ Under the ruins of my happiness.
‘ Most fortunately Ivor’s perilous plight
‘ Pleadèd his cause, and forced me to confess
‘ That duty even still prohibited flight.
‘ Fate of his life had made me arbitress ;
‘ To leave him as he was would be, I knew it,
‘ Like signing his death-warrant. Could I do it ?

XXXIV.

‘ Place for revenge there was not in my mind ;
‘ All that I felt was shame and impotence.
‘ They who can in revenge a refuge find
‘ Have still a past and future left—a sense
‘ Of something which, before them or behind,
‘ Remains, amidst life’s ruins, for defence
‘ Or else attack, to rally energy
‘ And hope. But no such stimulant had I.

XXXV.

‘ On whom should I revenge myself ? Alas,
‘ I only knew that I had been betrayed,
‘ I knew not even who my betrayer was !
‘ I saw the shrines where I had knelt and prayed,
‘ The mystic chalice that contained the mass,
‘ The altars upon which my life had laid
‘ Its holiest offering, and the trophied staves
‘ Whose banners sheltered consecrated graves,

XXXVI.

' All these—I saw them shattered by a blow
 ' Which seemed to leave, not my poor love alone,
 ' But all love, menaced by the only foe
 ' Love cannot overcome—the only one
 ' Whose least assaults leave love no weapons, no
 ' Asylum even—a lie ! My own had none,
 ' And all unarmed it had to fight. For I
 ' Could neither shun the strife, nor from it fly.

XXXVII.

“ Heavens ! ” I exclaimed, “ can Youth deceive ? If
 Youth
 “ Be insincere, where else, then, may Love find
 “ Sincerity on earth ? And where can Truth
 “ From the humiliation of mankind
 “ Her face conceal ? Is it not enough, forsooth,
 “ That men should traffic in all else ? what kind
 “ Of trade in counterfeit is theirs whose dealings
 “ With Truth are Forgeries of Truth's own feelings ? ”

XXXVIII.

' I to my side had called a brother—yes,
 ' A brother—for we both could trace our birth
 ' From martyrs perfect in devotedness
 ' To the divinest feeling upon earth.
 “ Brother,” I cried, “ thro' us, let Heaven redress
 “ The wrong that, life from life, and hearth from
 hearth,
 “ Our parents parted ; and their souls, above
 “ Their graves, unite in our predestined love ! ”

XXXIX.

' How stood the case ? Heaven owed a solemn debt
 ' To both our parents, and 'twas still unpaid ;
 ' For in their hearts its covenant it set,
 ' When " Love, and trust my loving care," it said,
 ' " Your love to bless ! " They loved and trusted :
 yet
 ' Heaven's promise earth's resistance to it made
 ' Abortive ; and, by loveless fate defeated,
 ' Heaven had from love's deserted cause retreated ;

XL.

' Whilst all that had from them been claimed by
 Heaven
 ' As the condition of its blessing, still
 ' Their faithful hearts without reserve had given,
 ' Loving and trusting wholly. Ill on ill
 ' In vain against their love and trust had striven,
 ' But not, it seemed, in vain against Heaven's will
 ' On their behalf. Away from earth they passed,
 ' Heaven's promise unaccomplished to the last ;

XLI.

' Their claim on it was still unsatisfied ;
 ' Its debt to them, still owing, thus remained
 ' Their children's heritage. That undenied,
 ' Yet still unsettled, claim had now attained
 ' To vast proportions. What a rich and wide
 ' Inheritance of bliss to be regained,
 ' If we, its true-born heirs, now understood
 ' The means to make our title to it good !

XLII.

' And so, to him whom I believed to be
' My heart's co-heir in this great heritage,
' I made appeal—"Come, brother! and, with me,
' " Firm, against Fate, before Heaven's chancery,
wage
' " The cause of Dispossessed Humanity!"
' Two men, both young, dealt with this embassy
' From a girl's faith. One of them disbelieved me,
' The other one, believing, had deceived me.

XLIII.

' Contèplating my heart's catastrophe,
' Stronger I felt my indignation grow.
' "No!" I exclaimed, "unsullied still shall be
' " The shrine whereof I am the priestess. No!
' "'Tis not my faith's insulted ark, but he
' " Whose sacrilegious hand its overthrow
' " Attempted, that shall here be overthrown;
' " And may this hour's disgrace be all his own!

XLIV.

' "Unchanged be still our places, his and mine,
' "Unchanged our parts! till, with despairing eyes,
' " The avenged divinity of Truth's wronged shrine
' " The wronger hath been forced to recognise.
' " Then, recognising Truth, her power divine
' " He shall adore, and, as his soul's best prize,
' " Desire to be, himself, her priest elected,
' " Only to find his sacrifice rejected!"

XLV.

‘And, draping round me the offended pride
‘Of all my vestal dignity, again
‘I took, and kept, my watchful place beside
‘The bed where, moaning feebly in his pain,
‘Lay the poor culprit who on me relied
‘Unconsciously (tho’ not, thank Heaven, in vain !)
‘For the hard rescue of a life that’s grown
‘Since then far dearer to me than my own.’

XLVI.

Cordelia paused and sighed. She seemed beset
By some supreme remembrance that subdued
All her sensations to a dream, and set
Around that dream a sudden solitude.
Her eyes were drooped, and their long lashes wet
With a soft brilliance. In this musing mood
She murmured, ‘Ah, ’tis hard to comprehend,
‘And harder still to explain, oneself, dear friend !

XLVII.

‘Full of self-contradictions, I confess,
‘A woman’s nature is. Its strength is made
‘Out of innumerable weaknesses,
‘And it is boldest when ’tis most afraid ;
‘Caprice is hid in its devotedness,
‘And pride in its humility displayed.
‘I had to bend my head, and bend it low,
‘A suppliant for the right to lift it now.’

XLVIII.

She said this with a little haughty smile,
That seemed an answer to some voice unheard
In her own heart. And silent for awhile
They both remained ; for Edelrath, who feared
Either to interrupt, or to beguile
Her thoughts away from what to him appeared
Their solemn searching of a beautiful soul,
Said nothing. Presently, she turned her whole

XLIX.

Sweet face upon him, filled with serious lights.
'How can I ever make this clear?' said she,
'It seems impossible! In those long nights
'I saw mine own Ideal come to me.
'This is no figure, but a fact. Some sights
'There are, which by a second sight we see,
'Yet not on that account are they less real ;
'Twas thus I really saw mine own Ideal.

L.

'The silentness of night ; the dimness there,
'That with its droplike sounds significant
'The ticking timepiece filled ; the tepid air
'Of the sick chamber, steeped in stimulant
'And sedative aromas, floating, rare
'And faint, from cups and phials : the low pant
'Of a pained slumber sighing in my ear ;
'All these diffused a mystic atmosphere ;

LI.

‘ An atmosphere that mirrored, as they rose,
‘ In its mirage the visions of the mind ;
‘ Phantasmal panoramas ! such as those
‘ Which, far away in Araby or Ind,
‘ The desert’s dreaming solitude bestows
‘ On fervid heavens unfanned by any wind :
‘ And this fine, sensitive atmosphere—this breath
‘ Of a life hovering on the verge of death, ’

LII.

‘ All hushed and dim with soft solemnities,
‘ Was to the nature, soft and solemn too,
‘ Of mine Ideal, as his native skies,
‘ Regained, are to some delicate sufferer who,
‘ Sent back to his own clime to die there, dies
‘ At least a painless death, and breathes anew
‘ An easier sigh, and smiles a happier smile,
‘ Smiling and sighing farewell all the while.

LIII.

‘ With all about it in that silent room
‘ Its image made itself familiar—moved
‘ Majestically through the perfumed gloom
‘ Between the priestess and the victim—roved
‘ Around the altar like its god, in whom
‘ Alone was lodged the power, with unreproved
‘ Assurance, to pronounce the victim’s fate,
‘ And to the priestess all her task dictate.

LIV.

' I felt that, from the influence of my will,
' This image, all emancipated now,
' Was passed away : but I could even still
' Its looks interpret, and I seemed to know,
' With a mysterious melancholy thrill,
' That it to me was whispering, "Since thou
' "No longer needest me, altho' in fact
' "I still exist, I for myself will act."

LV.

' Night after night renewed the visitation :
' Greeting me, careless, as one greets an old
' Acquaintance without formal salutation,
' It slid between the dim bed-curtain's fold,
' By Ivor's pillowed cheek assumed its station,
' Seemed with his dreams mute conference to hold,
' And to him, as it faded from my sight,
' Gave something of itself—night after night.

LVI.

' It was as when a dying man, before
' He dies, disposes of his property :
' Nor, till these nightlong interviews were o'er
' With Ivor, did the image, fleeting by,
' Deign to bestow on me a smile once more ;
' A smile that, half made up of mockery
' And half of sadness, still was suppliant,
' Tender, and searchingly significant.

LVII.

‘ At last, one night,—returning thus,—to me
‘ The form of mine Ideal more ethereal,
‘ And more indefinite, appeared to be ;
‘ In its deep gaze was a sad light sidereal,
‘ Solemn, and distant ; and I seemed to see
‘ Its motions thro’ some vision less material ;
‘ Slower than ever they had fallen yet,
‘ Its footsteps lingered, slackened by regret.

LVIII.

‘ In a profound sweet slumber Ivor lay ;
‘ Above the sleeper’s brow the image bowed,
‘ Kissed it, and, passing silently away
‘ Forever, like a disappearing cloud
‘ That cannot be recalled, (for night or day
‘ Never again, from its sepulchral shroud
‘ To me hath come my dear Ideal back)
‘ It vanished, leaving only in its track

LIX.

‘ The never-lost remembrance of a sweet
‘ Grave gesture, that just indicated where
‘ With him, across whose sleep we seemed to meet
‘ For the last time, the gifts it gave him were.
‘ Ere it could sigh farewell, it faded fleet ;
‘ And its fond lips the word unspoken there
‘ Left open, parted by a painless sigh,
‘ Like wings unclasped and just about to fly.

LX.

' On him, whom mine Ideal had, by this
' Farewell, bequeathed to me, I gazed : and now
' From his closed lids, to thank that parting kiss,
' A tear had started, and was trickling slow
' Down his thin cheek. O'er that poor tear of his
' I bent ; and, kneeling down beside him, low
' I breathed a vow which binds to his the heart
' That vowed it,—never, nevermore, to part !'

LXI.

Again Cordelia paused : again went on :
' As one love to another then gave place,
' I knew at last that the departing one
' Was self-love only. Yet it had the grace
' With which a sculptor clothes the shapeless stone
' His art endows with human form and face ;
' And the significance, to fervour wrought,
' With which a poet fills the shapeless thought ;

LXII.

' Nor can I think of it ungratefully.
' As to the sculptor is the statue, as
' The poem to the poet, so was my
' Ideal to myself. Its beauty was
' My own creation ; its utility
' Survived in what its influence brought to pass,
' For my requital when its task was done—
' A real love with a diviner tone !

LXIII.

‘ That real love, whose paths it had made straight,
‘ And whose approach along the desert years
‘ Its voice proclaimed, it lived to inaugurate
‘ And bless ; and, bearing from the vale of tears
‘ Its parting baptism, my heart, elate,
‘ Unhindered, and unhurt by doubts or fears,
‘ Went forth upon the mission it received,
‘ In love believing, and by love believed.’

LXIV.

Edelrath pressed a cordial kiss upon
Cordelia’s trembling hand. ‘ You have,’ said he,
‘ By conquering yourself, sublimely won
‘ What was already yours. But pardon me,’
He added in a fondly anxious tone,
‘ A fear lest all that now you feel should be
‘ Only the old Ideal—still the same,
‘ Tho’ in another form, with a new name ;

LXV.

‘ I mean, the same enthusiasm, still
‘ Related but remotely to life’s facts ;
‘ From whose illusions sweet your heart is ill
‘ Defended by the faith on which it acts.
‘ You think you know by heart Glenaveril,
‘ From what you have well called “ wild cataracts
‘ “ Of incoherent vehemence ”—revelations
‘ Only of a sick man’s disturbed sensations.

LXVI.

'But life's not fever. O my child, take care!
 'Is not this also an ideal creed?
 'Of its ideal promises beware!
 'I do not counsel you to pay no heed
 'To such outpourings as reveal the rare
 'And precious amiabilities that plead
 'For recognition of the rich contents
 'Of Ivor's nature; but, at all events,

LXVII.

'The actual life of day by day no more
 'All these fine qualities without alloy
 'Can use, than unadulterated ore
 'The goldsmiths can commercially employ.
 'Glenaveril, the sick man at death's door,
 'You know: but I, Glenaveril, man and boy,
 'Have known in the full healthy exercise
 'Of all his ordinary faculties:

LXVIII.

'Excellent faculties, I grant, they are;
 'Nor are they common ones. Of purest gold
 'His nature is; the worth of it is rare
 'In its refinement, rich in manifold
 'Merits. It has but one fault, I declare;
 '*There's no alloy in it.* But then, I hold,
 '*All is too-much.* All pure simplicity,
 'And unalloyed benevolence, is he!'

LXIX.

‘Add,’ said Cordelia, ‘all unselfishness !
‘All confidence ! With but a rotten root
‘To cling to, when into death’s dark abyss
‘Friendship, not pausing even to compute
‘The danger, flings itself, what more than this
‘Can Love exact from its most resolute
‘Disciple, in the way of guarantees
‘For all conceivable contingencies ?

LXX.

‘Yes,’ she went on, ‘believe me, it is not
‘Upon the sick man at death’s door, nor yet
‘On secrets only from delirium got,
‘That its well-founded faith my heart has set
‘Nor was it from that visionary grot
‘Where, sepulchred in robe and coronet,
‘Reposed love’s Dead Ideal, that at last
‘New light flashed o’er the future and the past ;

LXXI.

‘This time, at least, ’twas no imagination,
‘But fact, both positive and palpable,
‘To which I owed the welcome revelation.
‘And that reminds me I have yet to tell,
‘When first I learned from his own perturbation
‘That the sick man was not Emanuel,
‘What pains I took to work this problem out
‘By proofs that put the truth beyond a doubt.

LXXII.

' My Guardian from the first had deemed it best
' To search the papers of the sufferer, whom
' He still believes to be Emanuel, lest
' Their purport should require him to assume
' Some duty in Emanuel's interest ;
' But nothing that demanded, or left room
' For, any special action of that kind
' Did Eckermann in Ivor's papers find ;

LXXIII.

' All that he found there was—besides my own
' Poor letter to Emanuel—some few bills
' With pencil notes upon them jotted down ;
' A circular note from Lord Glenaveril's
' Bankers ; and, loose among these papers thrown,
' A long report, on farms, and mines, and mills,
' Signed " Matthew Grey," whom we supposed to be
' The late Earl's agent. All these papers he

LXXIV.

' Transmitted to the authorities at Berne.
' Their being in Emanuel's pocket-book,
' The confidential, secretarial, turn
' Which his relations with his dead friend took
' Sufficiently explained, and we could learn
' No more. For me, I never cared to look
' Beyond this explanation, till each word
' That from the sick man's fevered lips I heard

LXXV.

‘ Had justified my right to investigate
‘ A mystery of which I seemed to see
‘ Myself the victim,—and to learn my fate
‘ From every source accessible to me.
‘ I knew that in that pocket-book, whose late
‘ Contents had been disposed of, there could be
‘ No papers save of the most common kind,
‘ From which I neither hoped, nor sought, to find

LXXVI.

‘ The smallest secret. But I knew, no less,
‘ That I should find there all I cared to know—
‘ The truth at which it sickened me to guess!
‘ And so it was. I had no need to go
‘ In search of truth’s unconscious witnesses :
‘ For in each scrap there, to my shame and woe,
‘ The writing of that letter, which till then
‘ Had filled my heart with pride, I found again.

LXXVII.

‘ Among these papers there was one—I think
‘ It must have been a leaflet torn away
‘ From some small note-book—written in pale ink,
‘ Much blotted,—and the words I read there—they,
‘ When I seemed tottering, dizzy, on the brink
‘ Of an abyss, my rescue wrought—But stay !’
And here Cordelia from her bosom took,
And, with a tremulous voice, and tender look,

LXXVIII.

Read out, as o'er her treasure-trove she bent,
 These words—"Mem. Grey—Consult with valuer—
 "Accumulated surplus to be spent
 "In founding—it shall bear the name of Her—
 "Good Educational Establishment
 "(Endowed with fund sufficient to confer
 "Dowry on well-conducted when they wed)
 "For penniless maidens." 'When this note,' she said,

LXXIX.

'I conned, on these words too, scarce legible,
 'In pencil-marks across it traced, I came—
 "'How he would jeer me, dear Emanuel,
 "'Were I to tell him that Cordelia's name
 "'Had lent the benediction of its spell
 "'To this design!" My friend, you need not blame
 'My poor Ideal, if, when I perused
 'Those lines, mine eyes were all with tears suffused.

LXXX.

'Twas not, you see, ideal dreams alone,
 'But fact's significance, that undertook
 'My heart's conversion. And in every one
 'Of the contents of that most precious book
 'Some welcome word I found, that led me on
 'More trustfully and gratefully to look
 'Into the thoughts of him whose heart had known
 'How to respond so richly to my own.'

LXXXI.

‘ I ask no better,’ Edelrath replied,
‘ Cordelia, than to be disarmed by you ;
‘ And to convert me wholly to your side
‘ There rests but little more for you to do ;
‘ But I confess—forgive me, child,’ he sighed,
‘ That of my previous scruples one or two
‘ Restrain me still. How much I disapprove,
‘ Whether it be in friendship, or in love,

LXXXII.

‘ Of the least want of frankness, need I say ?
‘ A first refusal of the reverence due
‘ To scrupulous truth sufficed to lead astray
‘ A noble heart ; the second, tho’ ’tis true
‘ I cannot censure it in the same way,
‘ Since ’twas a fair incognito, and few
‘ Have ever had a worthier inspiration,
‘ Still, rendered more confused the situation ;

LXXXIII.

‘ But until now the fault, if fault there were,
‘ Was all on one side only, and Heaven knows
‘ That was enough ! Child, child, when once aware
‘ Of the clear truth, how could you tolerate those
‘ Continued torments of a heart laid bare
‘ To your inspection, conscious they arose
‘ Out of a situation false, which you,
‘ Its dupe no longer, knew to be untrue ?

LXXXIV.

'How could you, by a silence that proclaimed
'A falsehood, make yourself the associate
'Of the deception you had justly blamed,
'And, thus inverting, still perpetuate
'The fraud which else had died as soon as named?
'Why, having shunned so narrowly the fate
'Of that fraud's victim, on yourself confer
'The function of the executioner?

LXXXV.

'Glenaveril, tangled in the meshes dread
'Which fate had woven around him—crushed between
'Conflicting duties—stricken, heart and head,
'On every side, and torn with torments keen,
'Suffered atrociously. His thoughts you read,
'And all his sufferings by you were seen;
'One word from you the meshes would have broken,
'Yet on your lip that word remained unspoken;

LXXXVI.

'You hushed it, if it rose, and in your heart
'You hid it, with a courage of repression
'Almost miraculous! And, for my part,
'Much as I must admire such self-possession,
'I could not wish to have acquired the art
'Of exercising it. In this confession
'No premature reproach would I imply,
'Only a wondering curiosity.'

LXXXVII.

At that abrupt severe apostrophe,
Cordelia, until then so confident,
And calmly self-assured, appeared to be
Profoundly troubled. She stood still, and bent
Her head, but answered not. Both he and she
Had ceased to pace the chamber; and she leant,
Silent, against the wall; her arms close crossed
Upon her breast, as in reflection lost.



CANTO II.

THE TEACHER TAUGHT.

I.

EDELRATH, too, was silent; and he gazed
Upon Cordelia with searching eyes.
Her reticence distressed him, and amazed.
She did not seem to notice his surprise.
Still on the floor her looks remained, unraised ;
And the sole gesture whence you could surmise
Her inward agitation was a mute
Monotonous tapping movement of one foot.

II.

This silence lasted even after she
Had gradually lifted up her head,
Unlocked her arms, and, standing wistfully
At arms' length from him, on his shoulders laid
Both hands. In that position, archly free
To scan, in turn, the puzzled face he made,
She eyed him with a curious gaze, that blent
Looks of ingenuous astonishment

III.

And pained contrition. Thus, awhile she waited,
Not answering otherwise ; as tho' she deemed
That into language plain this gaze translated
The thoughts with which its mixed expression
gleamed ;
But absolutely unilluminated
By its unspoken answer still he seemed ;
And at the last she said, ' Stern friend, thou art
' Indeed a ruthless searcher of the heart ! '

IV.

' But you,' said Edelrath, ' who read so clear
' The hearts of others, surely need no guide
' To explore the secrets of your own, my dear ? '
Cordelia hung her head. ' Alas,' she sighed,
' Your question proves the contrary, I fear !
' The test to my self-knowledge it applied
' Hath shown me my self-ignorance, and I
' Owe to its inquest this discovery :

V.

' That hidden chambers in the heart there be,
' Which, when we into our own selves descend
' Guided by our own conscience only, we
' Never completely penetrate. Ah, friend,
' To search out those recesses, and to see
' What lurks obscurely at their further end,
' The guidance of another's hand we need,
' By unaccustomed ways our steps to lead.

VI.

‘ Yours has to me this service rendered now ;
‘ Showing me in my heart an unsuspected
‘ And ugly inmate, as I must allow.
‘ You, who the presence of it had detected
‘ In what you censure, can conceive not how
‘ It startles me to find myself infected
‘ By an intriguing spirit—for I admit
‘ There seems to be no other name for it.

VII.

‘ I had, myself, been deeply mystified ;
‘ And I suppose it was by instinct I
‘ Thus to reverse the operation tried.
‘ Is that it ? ’ Edelrath, at this reply,
Could not quite check a little glance of pride
Appropriate to the triumphant eye
Of the shrewd judge who has in solemn session
Extracted from the accused a full confession ;

VIII.

But such a triumph his kind heart’s sincere
Benevolence withheld him from enjoying ;
And soothingly he answered, ‘ Too severe
‘ Upon yourself you are, in thus employing
‘ A word that quite exaggerates what is, here
‘ In your case, nothing more than the alloying
‘ Particle human nature in all hearts
‘ To the most golden sentiments imparts.

IX.

' You have, I think, correctly recognised,
 ' But not correctly designated, what
 ' Induced you to prolong a mystery prized
 ' For its dramatic interest. 'Twas not
 ' The Spirit of Intrigue that thus devised
 ' The fifth act of the drama's painful plot,
 ' But rather that of Poësy. We are
 ' All of us poets on occasions rare,

X.

' And in relation to the influence
 ' Of feelings which to our own mental eye
 ' Present ourselves in some pathetic sense ;
 ' But in ourselves the Spirit of Poësy,
 ' To be effectual, must have evidence
 ' Of its effect on others. That is why
 ' Poets, no doubt, the world at large invite
 ' To read the egotisms they indite.

XI.

' The poem whereby each is most affected
 ' The drama of his own life needs must be :
 ' Grieve as he may, to see its course directed
 ' Towards a tragical catastrophe,
 ' Still, for the natural harmony detected
 ' In the unfolding of its action, he
 ' A secret admiration entertains,
 ' In spite of all anxieties or pains :

XII.

‘ And, as with awe, when seated at the play,
‘ We contemplate Macbeth’s impending fate,
‘ But let the piece the poet’s art display,
‘ Nor interrupt its progress, to relate
‘ To him whom it concerns the dreadful way
‘ In which Macduff was born, or intimate
‘ The cause why Birnam Wood appears to go
‘ With Siward’s force to Dunsinane ; even so,

XIII.

‘ There’s an artistic sentiment that ties
‘ Our tongues, suspends our wills, and weighs upon
‘ The normal action of our faculties,
‘ When we ourselves are caught and carried on,
‘ In their development, by destinies
‘ Of whose dread drama we are, not alone
‘ Spectators, but alas performers too,
‘ With parts that take from other parts their cue.

XIV.

‘ What is that sentiment, whose whispered call
‘ Reduces us to silence ? Is it not
‘ A reverence, innate and natural,
‘ For the Great Author of this Human Plot,
‘ Who both created and controls it all ?
‘ To Him, whose will doth to each act allot
‘ An end that by its actor is unknown,
‘ We abdicate the guidance of our own !’

XV.

‘Dear friend,’ Cordelia answered with a smile
Joyously grateful, tho’ the pleasant sound
Of her soft voice had in it all the while
The faintest tone of some slight underground
Of innocent satire, ‘What could reconcile
‘Your patient to the smarting of a wound
‘Inflicted purely for her benefit,
‘More sweetly than the balms you pour on it?’

XVI.

‘If aught to health itself can be preferred,
‘It must be the recovery, as I deem,
‘From loss of health ; and the most soothing word
‘Is that which gives us back our self-esteem ;
‘The consciousness of having only erred
‘Thro’ faults that common to our nature seem,
‘Is better than the pride to which we may
‘Be tempted by their absence to give way.

XVII.

‘So, thanks to your consoling exposition
‘Of how the artistic sentiment affects
‘Conduct, in that excusable condition
‘Of feeling which its influence directs
‘Without the action of our own volition,
‘I now am reconciled in all respects
‘To the dramatic harmony that’s shown
‘Throughout this little drama of my own ;

XVIII.

' The fifth act was the natural carrying out
' Of the first four of its well-managed plot ;
' And all, by their observance strict, no doubt,
' Of the dramatic law which suffers not
' The actors to concern themselves about
' The justice of the piece, or how the lot
' Of each upon the other may depend,
' Have brought the play to a successful end.

XIX.

' That's greatly to their credit, I must say !
' A little to my own too, may I boast ?
' Oh, I am quite enchanted with the way
' In which your goodness has contrived the most
' Kind and indulgent explanation,—nay
' The most ingenious too (it never crossed
' My own imagination) of my share
' In keeping up the mystery, I declare !

XX.

' In quite a new, and most redeeming, light,
' This generously-offered explanation
' Presents my conduct now to my own sight ;
' And I confess your stern interrogation
' Had thrown my conscience into a sad plight,
' Which sorely needed rehabilitation.
' How shall I thank you for the unexpected
' Self-reconciliation you have thus effected ?

XXI.

‘ If Monsieur Jourdain was amazed to find
‘ He, without knowing it, had spoken prose,
‘ Judge what a grateful wonder in my mind
‘ Is waked by your discovery, which shows
‘ That, thro’ an ignorance much of the same kind,
‘ I have conducted to a happy close
‘ A drama mainly made by my own part,
‘ As it appears, a masterpiece of art !

XXII.

‘ Nevertheless, truth forces me to own
‘ That I had, consciously, no such design ;
‘ And if from Ivor I still kept unknown
‘ The knowledge which had made his secret mine,
‘ The motive of my silence was alone
‘ A deep reluctance to disturb the fine
‘ And sensitive development of feelings
‘ Whose very reservation were revealings.

XXIII.

‘ All those revealings by their loveliness
‘ So fascinated my delighted eyes,
‘ That now I fear I may have failed to guess
‘ The full depth of unmerited miseries
‘ He suffered, under the tormenting stress
‘ Of scruples I could but in part surmise.
‘ I thought it due to him, I thought it best
‘ For his own struggling heart’s eventual rest,

XXIV.

‘ The issue of its struggle to await
 ‘ In patience—and let *him* be first to break
‘ A silence which prepared, perchance, some great
 ‘ Unprompted confidence, whence I should take
‘ All worth away did I precipitate
 ‘ Disclosures, he might hesitate to make
‘ For reasons utterly unknown to me.
‘ For, after all, what *did* I know? Just see,

XXV.

‘ Dear friend, how much of what I seemed to know
 ‘ Was inference, and how little I could call
‘ True knowledge : and then say, was I too slow
 ‘ In acting upon scattered hints so small?
‘ How could I risk, upon one reckless throw
 ‘ Of these light dice, the forfeiture of all
‘ That was, for both of us, at stake in such
‘ A chance between Too-little and Too-much?

XXVI.

‘ This is the tale I to myself made out
 ‘ By guesswork from the only fact I knew :—
‘ My letter to Emanuel, no doubt,
 ‘ Had found him sceptical ; most likely too,
‘ Contemptuously unconcerned about
 ‘ Its truth ; Glenaveril believed it true ;
‘ Of this I felt quite sure ; he must have got
‘ (But how, or why, my guesses told me not)

XXVII.

‘From his indifferent friend impatient leave
‘To answer it, and in Emanuel’s name;
‘This thought, at first, ’twas sickening to receive;
‘It filled me with disgust, and scorn, and shame;
‘Yet was it destined mainly to achieve
‘My rescued self-esteem; for, when I came
‘Better to understand the wounded man
‘Beside me, my own wounded pride began

XXVIII.

‘To find a solace in the thought that he
‘Had understood my letter from the first,
‘And, thro’ that letter understanding *me*,
‘Had yearned, with longings dearer than he durst
‘Acknowledge to himself, himself to be
‘All his poor friend refused to be. I nursed
‘This knowledge as a widowed mother would
‘Nurse a weak child. What now is understood

XXIX.

‘I knew not then, of Ivor’s fond design
‘Me from his own abundance to requite
‘For his friend’s scornful sacrifice of mine.
‘But why he had consented to indite
‘Such a request I did in part divine;
‘Suspecting he had been induced to write
‘What caused him afterwards such keen contrition,
‘In deference to another’s harsh condition.

XXX.

' And, knowing by the general report
' That Lord Glenaveril's fortune was immense ;
' Knowing, moreover, by a sweeter sort
' Of more indisputable evidence,
' (The evidence of mine own eyes, in short)
' That Ivor's love for me was no pretence ;
' Without exactly guessing all that now
' You have yourself enabled me to know,

XXXI.

' I felt that to a man in his position,
' Who probably set no great store upon
' The wealth which roused Emanuel's ebullition
' Of pride in poverty (a natural one !)
' The harshness of that sceptical condition
' A different standard of comparison
' Would make less obvious than Emanuel
' Meant it to be, and more forgivable.

XXXII.

' I guessed that the one feeling prevalent
' In Ivor's heart, to the complete exclusion
' Of every other thought or sentiment,
' (When, all his being in a sweet confusion,
' He wrote the answer to my letter sent)
' Was an inebriate love, that no intrusion
' On the delights of its inebriation
' Vouchsafed to sober-minded calculation.

XXXIII.

‘ Most likely, had the letter, he believed
‘ Your hands had burned, upon Emanuel’s
‘ Behalf, the aim he wrote it with achieved,
‘ And had Emanuel lived, and all things else
‘ Followed their natural courses, nor reprieved
‘ By unanticipated miracles
‘ A love that lighted its own funeral flame,
‘ He never would have known by its true name

XXXIV.

‘ The nature of the sentiment which I
‘ Had touched him with, by uttering my own.
‘ That headlong and spontaneous sympathy,
‘ (By other feelings bridled and kept down,)
‘ Must then have been constrained the tasks to ply,
‘ Friendship and Honour would have sternly thrown
‘ Upon its service. But Emanuel died,
‘ The victim of his own incredulous pride ;

XXXV.

‘ He died, and he was ignorant of all
‘ That most concerned him, to the last. Then came
‘ Our meeting. Prompt in answer to the call
‘ Which he had uttered in another’s name,
‘ Ivor beheld me come. The general
‘ Impression, and my own, were then the same,
‘ That Ivor was Emanuel ; and he
‘ Knew that Emanuel had ceased to be :

XXXVI.

‘ Emanuel had no longer any choice
‘ To make between belief and disbelief ;
‘ No fates depended on his silenced voice :
‘ The wrong which he had done me, past relief
‘ By him remained. My love could not rejoice,
‘ Nor my scorn punish, him. My shame and grief
‘ Could send no message of reproach or blame
‘ To the dead man. And Ivor bore his name !

XXXVII.

‘ For whom, and, as I deemed, at whose request,
‘ My wealth I had renounced, that there might be
‘ No obstacle between us. The behest
‘ On which I acted had been made to me
‘ *Thro’* Ivor, *by* Emanuel. The rest
‘ I knew not. This was all I knew, you see,
‘ And this was why, well knowing that he knew
‘ As much and more, I thought, “ What will he do ? ”

XXXVIII.

‘ That was an obvious question, to which I,
‘ Who asked it inly, could anticipate
‘ By no impatient promptings the reply
‘ Both pride and love compelled me to await.
‘ But what, of course, I knew not then, was why
‘ He, who still fancied that, at any rate,
‘ You had destroyed his letter’s loving treason,
‘ Was quite unable (for that natural reason)

XXXIX.

‘To understand my presence at his side ;
‘And that on *his* part too was much to know,
‘As yet unknown, ere he felt justified
‘In breaking silence. I was, any how,
‘By his reserve admonished to abide
‘A revelation which, however slow,
‘Must come from Ivor, if it came at all.
‘In this, admit that I was logical.’

XL.

‘Very!’ said Edelrath, ‘exactly what
‘A student always is in his third year,
‘Extremely strong in theory.’ ‘By that
‘You mean,’ replied Cordelia, ‘I fear,
‘Extremely weak in practice. I am at
‘An end, however, of my theories. Hear
‘Their practical result, in any case,
‘Ere you condemn it. I must now retrace

XLI.

‘My course a little. I’ve before you set
‘Exactly what the situation was
‘When you arrived. - But I’ve to tell you yet
‘More of the situation which, alas,
‘Ivor’s slow convalescence brought with it,
‘And with what lingering steps he seemed to pass
‘Out of his long delirious darkness, thro’
‘A world of twilight, ere himself he knew.

XLII.

' The self-consuming fever had expired :
' Its bodily pains and mental terrors all
' Slept like gorged reptiles ; and their victim, tired,
' Faint, prostrate, stunned by many a desperate fall
' In life's blind struggle for his undesired
' Release from death, lay there, too weak to call
' Returning Reason to the rescued throne
' From which for many a month she had been gone.

XLIII.

' My presence, at the first, surprised him not ;
' It mingled with impressions left behind
' By his last dreams. But dreams, like wounds, have
got
' A closing tendency. The two disjoined
' Ends of reality, above the spot
' Where they were severed, reuniting, bind
' Themselves together firmly, as sound flesh
' Over healed gashes forms itself afresh ;

XLIV.

' And, just as, when the new skin thickens o'er
' Some cicatrice, thro' all its closed abyss
' The blood's checked current circulates once more,
' So, when the dream's strong interruption is
' Suppressed, Remembrance hastens to restore
' Thought's old associations, which dismiss
' Ideas haply of a later date,
' Belonging to a different mental state.

XLV.

‘ This rally of life’s forces, this alert
‘ Sounded by Convalescence to each sense
‘ That still unvanquished, tho’ not all unhurt,
‘ Responds, yet panting from the vehemence
‘ Of its last desperate struggle to assert
‘ Life’s cause,—all this is the glad evidence
‘ Which Gaiety for Life’s return provides,
‘ To show that o’er its triumph she presides ;

XLVI.

‘ It is the lark that sweetly sings in heaven
‘ O’er the red furrows of the battle-field.
‘ How often, sitting watchful, morn and even,
‘ By the hushed couch where my poor sufferer,
 healed
‘ But helpless still (a conqueror who had striven
‘ With giants!) now to all around appealed,
‘ Childlike, with wondering eyes and questionings
‘ Renewed, for knowledge of the simplest things—

XLVII.

‘ How often, in such moments, have I smiled
‘ To watch the embarrassed, disconcerted, air
‘ Of Ivor’s memories, unreconciled
‘ To their surroundings, wondering where they were,
‘ In unremembered places ! Like a child
‘ Away from home, that longs, but does not dare,
‘ To touch each unfamiliar thing it sees
‘ Within its reach (as, gathering by degrees,

XLVIII.

‘ And one by one, they all arrived in turn)
‘ Each, full at first of curiosity,
‘ Was garrulous, and inquisitive to learn
‘ All about everything ; but, presently
‘ Discouraged, it withdrew, and seemed to yearn
‘ For something which it found not. By and by,
‘ Another took its place, but fared no better ;
‘ And so they came and went. That fatal letter,

XLIX.

‘ Which Ivor must have thought you had destroyed,
‘ He did not seem the least surprised to see
‘ Safe in my hands ; nor did he look annoyed
‘ When called Emanuel. The fact is, he
‘ Had wandered far ; and from those dismal, void,
‘ And distant realms whence he at last was free,
‘ Returning tired, the rest for which he pined,
‘ He sought in the first inn that he could find ;

L.

‘ To him it mattered little where he lay,
‘ So long as he lay quiet ; the inn’s sign
‘ And the host’s name, he asked not. Thus, one day,
‘ Seeing the letter in my hands, “ ‘Tis mine ! ”
‘ He cried, “ My letter ! ” Back, and far away
‘ His thoughts then strayed. “ It was beneath a fine
‘ “ Old tree,” he murmured, “ that I wrote to you
‘ “ That letter. Ah yes, and the birds sang too !

LI.

“ And all the while that I was writing it
“ Mine eyes were on your portrait. ’Twas the one
“ You sent me. That is how each word was writ.
“ A lovely portrait ! exquisitely done !
“ And what a striking likeness ! How it hit
“ So accurately the peculiar tone
“ Of your expression is incredible ;
“ The painter of it must have known you well ;

LII.

“ I also knew you by it perfectly
“ The very moment we first met at—where,
“ Where was it ? ” “ But, Emanuel,” said I,
“ I never sent my portrait to you.” Then
‘ He gazed at me with an astonished eye,
‘ And sighed, “ You never sent it ? I declare
“ ’Twas in your letter, tho’—where am I ?—stay !
“ I fancied—are you not Cordelia ? ”

LIII.

“ Yes, dear,” I answered, “ I, indeed, am she :
“ And I so long and well have known you, too,
“ That of no portrait had I need, to be
“ In that same moment just as sure ’twas you,
“ When in the breakfast-room at Chamouni
“ We met, and each at once the other knew.
“ Do you forget, we found you travelling still
“ With that ill-fated Lord Glenaveril ? ”

LIV.

' I saw that, when I answered thus, he took
' My presence for a vision. For he sighed
' Doubtfully, and besought me with a look
' Of piteous apprehension that implied
' The terror of a child who cannot brook
' The darkness, not to leave him yet. I tried
' To reassure him, as in mine I clasped
' One of his hands. Thereat he flushed, and gasped,

LV.

' And trembled ; and then timidly put out
' His other hand in an irresolute way
' Towards my arm, as tho' he were about
' To try if it were solid, and would stay
' Beneath his touch. But to resolve that doubt
' He did not dare ; and, sinking back, he lay
' Thinking, and puzzled what to understand
' From my reply, while still I held his hand.

LVI.

' After a while, he turned and said, " Just now
' " I heard you say that I was travelling still
' " With some one—'twas a name I think I know.
' " Who was it ? " " It was Lord Glenaveril,"
' I answered, " your ill-fated friend." And low
' He muttered, in a tone that made me thrill,
' " Glenaveril, my ill-fated friend ! I was
' " Travelling with him ? Are you quite sure ? " " Alas,

LVII.

“ “Yes !” I replied, “quite sure.” And Ivor fell
 ‘ Into a reverie ; then asked again,
 “ “Why did you say *alas* ?” “ Emanuel,
 “ “I ought perhaps,” I answered, “to refrain
 “ “From talking to you, for you are not well ;
 “ “You have been many months in dreadful pain,
 “ “And still are very feeble ; but I know
 “ “That you, thank God, are out of danger now ;

LVIII.

“ “And tho’ the cruel hurts which you received
 “ “In that stupendous effort, when your skill
 “ “And desperate courage, dear, almost achieved
 “ “Your lost friend’s rescue, must be painful still,
 “ “I do not doubt your mind will be relieved
 “ “By talking of this poor Glenaveril.”
 “ And “ Poor Glenaveril ! ” he vaguely said,
 “ “Why *poor* Glenaveril ? Is he, too, dead ? ”

LIX.

‘ The sad significance of that word *too*
 ‘ I made as tho’ I had not marked. I feared
 ‘ To leave his mind in silence to pursue
 ‘ The thoughts which troubled it ; for it appeared
 ‘ As if it were preparing to renew
 ‘ Its dismal wanderings. And so I reared
 ‘ His crumpled cushion, propped it to his brow,
 ‘ And went on talking to him—any how.

LX.

- “Dearest,” I said, “you must not be downcast ;
“All that one man could do to save another
“You did, and more. What courage to the last,
“What coolness, what resource ! You mourn
a brother
“I never knew ; but, since he shared your past,
“I mourn him too. No more in silence smother
“Thoughts that from utterance crave relief, no doubt ;
“And him you loved so, let us talk about.

LXI.

- “You think that I speak lightly of sad things ?
“Well, that is true. Sad things have had their day
“Too long with you ; and these light chatterings
“Of mine may haply help to chase away
“The gloom that silence o’er remembrance flings.
“Think this, and nothing more, of all I say ;
“Call me a chatterbox, or what you will !
“And tell me, now, this Lord Glenaveril ?

LXII.

- “Who was he ? You were brought up, he and you,
“Together, like two brothers, were you not ?
“And born the same day, and the same hour too ?
“I’ve heard that. Strange, with such a different lot
“For each ! And yet I know how warm and true
“The love you bore each other. Tell me what
“Your friend was like. I should have loved him well,
“If he was like my dear Emanuel.

LXIII.

“ Like you, I know that he in childhood lost
“ Father and mother—was an only son—
“ And I suppose he must have held a most
“ Exalted rank, and been by every one
“ Much honoured, in his lifetime : for the cost
“ And pomp of his interment was upon
“ A scale which shocked, I own, by its misplaced
“ Display of homage, my plebeian taste.

LXIV.

“ Once, I remember, dear Emanuel,
“ I saw, and followed to his lowly grave,
“ The funeral of a beggar. None could tell
“ The dead man’s name, nor aught about him, save
“ That they, one morning, by the wayside well,
“ Dead in his rags, had found him, where to crave
“ An alms, at sunset, he last sat. He died
“ A nameless vagrant, on the bare roadside ;

LXV.

“ But all the village, none the less, turned out
“ To follow to the grave that pauper’s bier.
“ The dead should have no difference made about
“ Death’s common dignity. In life, I fear,
“ Complete Equality, beyond a doubt,
“ Would lower the whole level. But ’tis clear,
“ Is it not, that, with all that equalizes
“ Our reverence for the dead, the level rises ?

LXVI.

- “ And at the burial of the young, in truth,
“ Lugubrious pomp seems doubly out of place.
“ It is so beautiful to die in youth !
“ Your poor friend was the last of a great race,
“ I have been told. I heard on every mouth
“ The praises of his goodness, charm, and grace ;
“ And surely, in whatever sphere they dwell,
“ Such souls are their own Heavens, Emanuel.

LXVII.

- “ Had yours, my dearest, been the life Death took
“ That dreadful day, there would not then have been
“ So many fine folks flocking forth to look,
“ So many staves and banners to be seen ;
“ For High Birth has not in her Golden Book
“ Inscribed your name ; which, like my own, is
 mean ;
“ But one poor widow, who was ne'er a wife,
“ Would for your funeral have wept all her life !

LXVIII.

- “ You see, dear, I can speak of Death, and all
“ That Death makes sad, not lightly, but at least
“ Without a shudder ; and, whate'er befall,
“ I neither hate nor fear that dark High Priest
“ Of Nature's mysteries, whose solemn call
“ Takes from us, to preserve for love, increased
“ By every grave love's tears are wept above,
“ The heavenliest part of what belongs to love.

LXIX.

“Is it not so? and you, Emanuel,
 “Do you not feel it, also?” “Yes,” he said,
 ‘Sighingly, and almost inaudible,
 “Of course I feel it, since I, too, am dead.”
 ‘And, while he looked at me, his eyelids fell,
 ‘Fatigued, and with a smile he turned his head
 ‘Upon the cushion, sighed again one deep
 ‘Sigh of relief, and softly fell asleep.

LXX.

‘Little by little, as from day to day
 ‘His recollections stengthened, and grew more
 ‘Complete and clear, in a circuitous way
 ‘He asked a thousand questions o’er and o’er;
 ‘Taking immense precautions not to say
 ‘One word that could reveal, what I forebore
 ‘To notice, tho’ I could not fail to see,
 ‘Their secret object, which was plain to me.

LXXI.

‘He soon, no doubt, acquired the certitude
 ‘That, just so long as nobody who knew
 ‘His face by sight approached our neighbourhood,
 ‘He by the world as dead, and buried too,
 ‘Would be regarded; and he seemed to brood
 ‘With satisfaction on that dreary view
 ‘Of his position, and with desperate
 ‘Tenacity to cling to such a fate.

LXXII.

' Under the influence, as I could see,
' Of these ideas, he in pleading tone,
' Complained that the hotel at Chamouni
' Was an uncomfortably noisy one,
' And piteously entreated he might be
' Taken away by us to some more lone
' And quiet spot. He viewed with undisguised
' Alarm the risk of being recognised ;

LXXIII.

' And I divined that, with a resolute
' Persistence, he was meditating now
' Some project difficult to execute.
' The trouble that he suffered, I avow,
' So troubled me, who sadly watched his mute
' Endurance of it, and could see it grow,
' That I myself was almost, every day,
' Upon the point of fairly giving way.

LXXIV.

' Abandoning my own resolve, confessing
' All that I knew, and making him aware
' That I was not the dupe of that distressing
' Mystification. Why I did not dare
' To indulge an impulse day by day more pressing,
' Was that, on his account, I feared to bare
' My heart too soon, and force on a solution
' Not brought about by his own free conclusion.

LXXV.

'It seemed to me, for his own peace of mind
 'And self-respect in all the time to come,
 'Essential this embarrassment should find
 'A natural crisis, brought about thro' some
 'Solution of it by himself designed ;
 'That his own conscience should feel quite at home
 'In his own part ; the part itself be fine,
 'And not a part subordinate to mine ;

LXXVI.

'And therefore was it that I feared to stir
 'Without a signal from him to proceed ;
 'Lest some last trial of his character,
 'Some effort, or some test, his soul might need,
 'Thro' perfected self-knowledge to confer
 'On love itself a better guaranteed
 'And surer future, might, by my mistake,
 'Be lost to him who suffered for my sake.'

LXXVII.

At this remark, Cordelia's narrative
 By Edelrath was interrupted ; and
 (Like one whose mind is suddenly alive
 To some new truth) with an emphatic hand
 Striking his forehead, as if thus to drive
 The thought he had begun to understand
 Home to the hilt, 'Cordelia !' he said,
 'You have, indeed, with usury repaid

LXXVIII.

'The little lesson which from me you took,
 'When I was vain enough to give it you!
 'Good heavens!' he cried, with an admiring look,
 'To think, dear child, that I am sixty-two,
 'That life to me has been a lesson-book,
 'That, with it, all my age has had to do
 'Was to instruct the young,—yet here am I
 'By you, a young girl, unexpectedly

LXXIX.

'Instructed, for the first time, in a truth
 'The simplest, and the most important too!
 'What wondrous intuitions are in youth,
 'When youth is genius, as it is in you!
 'Yes! I receive this lesson from your mouth,
 'With all the reverence that to truth is due—
 '*To aid the will too much, is to pervert*
 '*Its nature, and, instead of helping, hurt.*

LXXX.

'What is it, child, what is it, this fine sense
 'Of human nature's secret ways, by Heaven
 'Bestowed on women in such opulence,
 'And to us men a gift so rarely given?
 'Whate'er it be, its value is immense,
 'And, upon great occasions, it is even
 'A safer guide than reason to the soul,
 'Whose search for truth so oft mistakes the goal!'

LXXXI.

A village maid, who daily moves about
Barefooted, with unconscious grace and ease,
If in some fine, stiff, gold brocade dressed out,
Becomes at once embarrassed ; and by these
Superlatives of praise, altho', no doubt,
They were sincere, the Scholar failed to please
His Pupil-Teacher, who upon him bent
A wistful gaze of blank bewilderment.



CANTO III.

THE LAST METAMORPHOSIS.

I.

' FAR off from shore, upon a moonless night,
' The fisher boy,' Cordelia said, ' can steer
' His boat safe homeward by the guiding light
' That from his mother's cottage twinkles clear ;
' And, without either chart or compass, right
' Around the dusky foreland, free from fear
' He pilots his small craft, companionless,
' Trusting one simple sense, we all possess :

II.

' We all possess it, and it guides us all ;
' Each feels it, haply, in a different way ;
' But what we feel we by the same word call,
' And with the same faith follow ; I dare say,
' As I in mine, each individual
' In his or her way, too, its guidance may
' Unconsciously adopt ; which does but prove
' That life is not more natural than love.'

III.

With this remark on it, she put aside
The genuine, tho' gorgeous, compliment
To her surprised simplicity applied
By Edelrath : and then (as if intent
On showing him that he was justified,
At least, in trusting to her provident
Perception of the wants which others feel
In ways they do not venture to reveal)

IV.

She crossed the room, and silently took down,
From where upon the mantlepiece it lay,
His much-missed pipe ; replenished with her own
White hand its bowl ; in the same quiet way
Stripped from a journal, on the table thrown,
A paper spill ; and, lighting it, in gay
Mock gravity of rebuke, without a word,
On her encomiast his heart's wish conferred.

V.

This ceremony over, ' Now,' she said,
' Let me, as novelists were wont to write
' After a platitude, " resume the thread
' " Of my narration." ' Half withdrawn from sight,
Like Zeus, in curling clouds, his misty head
Edelrath nodded with serene delight,
And she went on. ' Ivor, in this unrest,
' By two pre-occupations was possessed ;

VI.

‘ One of them was to tell the truth to you ;
‘ The other one, to hide it still from me ;
‘ Daily more tyrannous became these two
‘ Alternate torments ; and ’twas sad to see
‘ How each in turn brought aggravation new
‘ To his discomfort. The first moment he
‘ Could hold a pen he wrote to you ; this done,
‘ Part of the trouble on his mind seemed gone ;

VII.

‘ And with my Guardian he forthwith began
‘ To hold long conversations. Every day
‘ I heard him questioning Herr Jonathan,
‘ With feverish eagerness, about the way
‘ Whereby a fairly-educated man
‘ Might fastest prosper in America ;
‘ Questioned as eagerly, in turn, about
‘ His own intentions, he seemed much put out.

VIII.

‘ Jonathan asked him if, with the intent
‘ Of turning to advantage over there
‘ His studies in theology, he meant
‘ To adopt the ecclesiastical career ;
‘ And, to evade an answer, he gave vent
‘ To a whole volley of remarks severe
‘ On the commercial character allowed
‘ The Clergy of a Church that’s unendowed ;

IX.

‘ He said that nothing could, he thought, excuse
‘ The Minister of God who seeks to make
‘ A traffic in the rental of church pews ;
‘ Nor would he to such subterfuges take
‘ As biblical bazaars, and fairs ; nor use
‘ The sacred songs of Zion for the sake
‘ Of sanctifying concerts planned to squeeze
‘ Pence from the public upon pious pleas.

X.

‘ All this my Guardian, as you may suppose,
‘ Took eagerly as grist to his own mill.
‘ I saw that he was bursting to disclose
‘ His plans to our disguised Glenaveril,
‘ Whose natural temperament is not, Heaven knows,
‘ Less suited to the pulpit than the till ;
‘ And whose strong predilection was with zest
‘ For agricultural enterprise expressed.

XI.

‘ The drift of Ivor’s questions proved to me
‘ That he, at last, had quite made up his mind
‘ To the assumption of what seemed to be
‘ A part he was sincerely more inclined
‘ To play than to renounce. This part, you see,
‘ (At first suggested only by a kind
‘ Caprice, and then imposed by a severe
‘ Fatality) had to his heart grown dear ;

XII.

‘ For Love into the place of Fate had stept,
‘ Or had his own place taken by Fate’s side ;
‘ Love and Fate pointed the same way, and kept
‘ The same course, too. Each sigh that he had
 sighed,
‘ Murmuring my name—each tear that he had wept,
‘ Mourning Emanuel—now sanctified
‘ What, in a future of all else bereft,
‘ To him appeared life’s highest duty left :

XIII.

‘ The duty of endeavouring to repair
‘ A wrong resulting from that reckless pact,
‘ Whose instigator’s death had left him there,
‘ Confronted with its victim : and, in fact,
‘ Ivor, to make amends for his own share
‘ In that wrong’s only reparable act,
‘ Had reckoned on a time reserved for some
‘ Surrender of his wealth. This time was come ;

XIV.

‘ And now the sacrifice of all appeared,
‘ Not only the least painful reparation
‘ Owed to a woman for whom love endeared
‘ The utmost suffered, but a light taxation
‘ Which (levied on it by his dead friend) cleared
‘ From an else undischARGEABLE obligation
‘ The heritage of love, Emanuel’s death
‘ Was, at that price, permitted to bequeath.

XV.

‘And so it was, I think, Glenaveril came
‘To what I could not doubt was a decision
‘That gave him ease—the sacrifice of name
‘And title, and, in short, the whole position
‘Due to the hereditary power and fame
‘Of his Ancestral House—without suspicion
‘That there was anything at all heroic
‘In being such an unacknowledged stoic.

XVI.

‘All these he would renounce without regret,
‘(Or even the poor recompense it might
‘Have been to him to feel, in doing it,
‘That I, at least, who could alone requite
‘The sacrifice on which his heart was set,
‘Would ever know it) and in life’s hard fight
‘For means to live enroll himself anew,
‘Under the feigned name which his faith made true.

XVII.

‘He told me this, himself, to-night, and said
‘That nothing shall divert him from it now.’
Edelrath, with a voice that seemed afraid
Of what it uttered in hoarse accents low,
As on Cordelia’s arm his hand he laid,
Anxiously interrupted her—‘But *you*,
‘Cordelia! what have you to say to this
‘Extravagantly wild resolve of his?’

XVIII.

‘Wild, or extravagant, whate’er it be,’
She answered, ‘I approve it.’ And, with voice
And look still more uncomfortable, he
Replied, ‘Yes, yes ! one may approve the choice
‘Made by another—one may even see
‘In all its motives reason to rejoice
‘That he should make it—and yet view the case
‘Quite differently, were one in his place.’

XIX.

‘In *his* place,’ said Cordelia, ‘I would do
‘As *he* does.’ ‘Ah, but that’s not what I mean !’
He answered her impatiently, ‘for you,
‘My dear, are *not* in *his* place ; and, between
‘Ourselves, you’ve not the smallest right, you know,
‘To choose for him. I think you have not seen
‘The drift of my enquiry. I am loth
‘To say it, but this choice concerns you both

XX.

‘Most vitally ! Too much so, I must think,
‘For either of you with impartial eyes
‘To examine its conditions. On the brink
‘Of quite unfathomable destinies
‘I see you standing, and I dare not shrink
‘From the necessity to scrutinize
‘Closely a choice which, with its sequels all,
‘When once ’tis taken, nothing can recall.

XXI.

‘ I know your absolute sincerity ;
‘ I know you’ll not endeavour to evade
‘ A question plainly asked, by a reply
‘ Ingeniously to miss its meaning made ;
‘ And, knowing this, the one thing more that I
‘ Desire to know, Cordelia, by your aid,
‘ About this choice of Ivor’s, is the light
‘ In which it strikes your own clear sense of right ;

XXII.

‘ In other words, the thing I want to know
‘ Is how you look upon it—not as one
‘ Whose personal feelings it concerns—nor how
‘ You’d have Glenaveril act, if ’twere alone
‘ His heart, or yours, he had to think of now,
‘ In estimating what/’s to be done ;
‘ But reckoning, too, the duties that arise
‘ From an inheritance of centuries.

XXIII.

‘ Each orb that decks Glenaveril’s coronet
‘ Some mandate to its owner doth insphere ;
‘ Under those five fixed stars, whose beams beget
‘ One constellation, he was born ; and, ere
‘ His life began, those stars its course had set.
‘ Consider then, and frankly say, my dear,
‘ How you judge Ivor’s choice in its relation
‘ To the fair force of that consideration.’

XXIV.

Cordelia hesitated. 'It is much
'To ask,' she answered, 'of a woman.' 'Yes,'
Sighed Edelrath, with a despondent touch
Of sadness in his tone, 'and I confess
'Tis much to ask, too, of a man. To such
'A question, if himself it more or less
'Concerned, there is not any man, I must
'Confess, whose answer I could wholly trust.

XXV.

'But in your own intuitively true
'Perception of what's right, and in your rare
'And singular unselfishness, I do
'Put confidence. Moreover, I declare
'I need to know what, from this point of view,
'Your sentiments and inclinations are,
'On more than one account : their aid I need
'Towards a twofold object to proceed :

XXVI.

'The situation I would probe, to me
'Is full of features new ; nor need I say,
'Now that Glenaveril's part in it is free
'At least from all deception, every way
'This single fact has altered it, I see,
'Materially ; and much that yesterday
'I should have disapproved without a doubt,
'To-night I needs must hesitate about ;

XXVII.

‘And, therefore, I require to know your own
‘Impressions of a case in which I feel
‘Your voice must be decisive, not alone
‘To judge of *it*, but (let my love and zeal
‘On dear Glenaveril’s behalf atone
‘For this more personal ground of my appeal)
‘To judge of *you*.’ ‘’Tis just!’ the girl replied.
She paused, and wistfully the old man eyed;

XXVIII.

He was a judge whose summons she felt bound
To acquiesce in. ‘You,’ she sighed at last,
‘Enforce a duty, not indeed disowned,
‘But which, instinctively, these three months past,
‘My thoughts have shunned. Upon such delicate
ground
‘I venture, I avow it, with a vast
‘Misgiving, and timidity; but still,
‘I shall endeavour to obey your will.

XXIX.

‘And this assize was due! I know that Fear
‘Is a bad counsellor; and I know, too,
‘That Truth is certain, soon or late, to appear
‘In front of us, whatever we may do
‘To avoid the meeting. Better, when we hear
‘Her steps approaching, for the interview
‘Prepare at once, and meet her face to face!
‘As I will try to do, in any case.

XXX.

‘ Well, then—But, O my dear good friend, just think
‘ How hard the task is, you have set to me !
‘ I cannot fancifully thus unlink
‘ My life from Ivor’s ; cannot cease to be
‘ A woman in whose heart there’s not a chink
‘ Or crevice from his love’s dear influence free ;
‘ Nor can I from his life strip off his love,
‘ And what remains then calmly pore above,

XXXI.

‘ Perusing its chilled features, pale and grey,
‘ With an impartially indifferent mind !
‘ Would *you*, to form a judgment, let us say,
‘ Of some disputed picture’s value, find
‘ That the best course is first to wipe away
‘ Its colours—the bare drawing (left behind,
‘ Hueless and hard) the better to inspect,
‘ Uninfluenced by the colouring’s effect ?

XXXII.

‘ Alas, dear friend, but when a picture hath
‘ Of all its colour, and a life of all
‘ Its love, been stripped, what sort of ghostly wraith
‘ Remains of either ? ’ ‘ Nay, I do not call
‘ For Love’s exclusion,’ answered Edelrath,
‘ From his fair place in Reason’s Judgment Hall.
‘ To what but love did Solomon appeal,
‘ A claimed life’s rightful claimant to reveal ? ’

XXXIII.

‘ You reassure me ! ’ said Cordelia.
‘ The moment that a power to countermand
‘ The sword, by Argument unsheathed to slay
‘ My heart’s disputed offspring, in Love’s hand
‘ Is graciously permitted still to stay,
‘ Serene before the Judgment Seat I stand ;
‘ Not doubting that sagacious Solomon
‘ To the true mother will restore her son ;

XXXIV.

‘ And, knowing well that Love is on my side,
‘ To Reason, upon yours, I can afford
‘ Fearlessly this avowal to confide—
‘ That wealth to me is not an empty word ;
‘ That noble birth, and the inherited pride
‘ Of an illustrious ancestry, whose sword
‘ Hath carved its name on a remembered past,
‘ I reverence as a right to be held fast ;

XXXV.

‘ Nor would I yield those gifts to any claim
‘ On their surrender, save the claim of that
‘ Which, lost to keep them, takes from noble name
‘ And lofty rank the consciousness of what
‘ ’Tis theirs to represent and to proclaim—
‘ Honour, so haughtily immaculate
‘ That, for an acorn pledged, ’twould give away
‘ A forest, rather than its pledge gainsay !

XXXVI.

‘ And more than this ; for I do not deny
‘ That it would sadden me, and even pain,
‘ To see a proud young cedar, from some high
‘ Ethereal peak, its natural domain,
‘ Lopped down, that common carpenters may try
‘ To manufacture out of its fine grain
‘ A woodman’s hatchet. I concede to you
‘ All this ; and, as you feel, I feel it too.

XXXVII.

‘ But is this all that I, for Ivor’s sake,
‘ Am bound to think of? Is it even what he
‘ Is, by the Voice of Honour, called to make
‘ His chief consideration? Let us see!
‘ ’Tis not Glenaveril’s Earldom that’s at stake,
‘ For that refilled already seems to be ;
‘ It is Glenaveril’s Earl; and this the test—
‘ What for his own life’s happiness is best?

XXXVIII.

‘ Do not imagine that by *happiness*
‘ I mean a self-indulgent disregard
‘ Of duty or of honour. Nought can bless
‘ The abandonment of either; nought so hard
‘ To bear, as the discomfort, more or less
‘ Incessant, of those sybarites who discard
‘ Even the poor restraints of prejudice,
‘ When these conflict with passion or caprice.

XXXIX.

‘ I know all this: and I believe the least
‘ High-minded woman, when she loves a man,
‘ Has so far, by mere force of loving, ceased
‘ From all self-seeking, that she never can
‘ Think her own happiness in aught increased
‘ By his dishonour. Its best guardian
‘ And sentinel his self-respect, perchance,
‘ Will find in her love’s sensitive vigilance.

XL.

‘ Let us imagine, then, that Ivor, Lord
‘ Glenaveril, from his recent grave exhumed,
‘ Resuscitated, and anon restored
‘ To all his rightful honours, has resumed
‘ That place the world will hasten to accord
‘ To its returning owner. He is doomed,
‘ However, to return accompanied
‘ To this high place by a plebeian bride.

XLI.

‘ To Cæsar thus is rendered Cæsar’s due,
‘ And Cæsar is content. Are you so sure?
‘ That small great world, composed of just a few
‘ Indigenous grandeurs whose descent is pure,
‘ Gives to Glenaveril’s Earl a welcome new;
‘ But with what sentiment will it endure
‘ The presence of Glenaveril’s Countess? Here
‘ The case (admit!) becomes by no means clear.

XLII.

‘ To which of the two mothers shall be given
‘ The child both claim? For recollect, Love’s
Right
‘ (Revered by Solomon!) is a Cæsar even
‘ More jealous than the other one, and quite
‘ As resolute to wring from earth and heaven
‘ All that is owed it, down to the last mite.
‘ Ah, here’s the crux! And what will happen now
‘ You guess? The claimed life will be split in two.

XLIII.

‘ There’ll be two camps: the folks in one will say,
‘ “*He hath done well, for charming is his bride!*”
‘ Those in the other camp will answer, “*Nay,*
‘ “*He hath done ill, for he is misallied!*”
‘ Between the twain what will, from day to day,
‘ Be *his* position? mine I put aside.
‘ Will it not be a most ambiguous one?
‘ With such positions what is to be done?

XLIV.

‘ For my part, I admit them not at all,
‘ If I am called upon to plan out life,
‘ Into the rightful or the natural
‘ Conditions of it. For what mean they? Strife
‘ Ill-matched between the Individual
‘ And Universal! Battle to the knife
‘ Waged by a pygmy, every day and hour,
‘ Against a giant of stupendous power!

XLV.

‘ Woman or man, it matters not—the strain
‘ Of such positions, and the weight and heat
‘ Of their defence, no life can long sustain ;
‘ Those who accept them must aspire to beat
‘ The world, and that’s an aspiration vain ;
‘ The only way we can escape defeat
‘ Is not to court it, as detours you make
‘ To turn a fortress which you cannot take.

XLVI.

‘ If, when ’tis raining, you would not be wet,
‘ Then stay at home ! That is my recipe.
‘ Reject it, and a soaking you will get,
‘ However great a personage you may be :
‘ Your garments you may dry again, and yet
‘ Never again be able to get free
‘ From the tormenting rheumatism, got
‘ By going out of doors when you should not.’

XLVII.

Here Edelhath, however, interposed.

‘ In these anticipative fears,’ he said,
‘ You have, my child, unconsciously disclosed
‘ Your German origin. You need not dread
‘ A world where even vulgarity, when hosed
‘ In cloth of gold, is treated as well bred.
‘ The English Aristocracy, my dear,
‘ Is not fastidious. Many a British Peer

XLVIII.

'Has, let me tell you, a plebeian wife ;
 'And many a British Peeress have I known
 'Whose parentage was in a sphere of life
 'From every point of view beneath your own ;
 'The Fashionable World, I'm told, is rife
 'In England with fair *parvenues*, full-blown
 'By its benignant smiles ; and there, they say,
 'Your countrywomen bear the palm away.'

XLIX.

'And if,' Cordelia answered, 'this be so,
 'What does it prove ? that High Society
 'Is there decaying, and has fallen below
 'The standard you have set before mine eye,
 'As that to which the nobly-born still owe
 'A noble duty. There's no reason why
 'Ivor's identity should pay the cost
 'Of keeping up a caste whose own is lost ;

L.

'And as for the examples you have cited,
 "'Twas surely not for thus plebeianizing
 'Patrician manners, that you first invited
 'Attention to the lofty claims arising
 'From each of those five orbs, by birth united
 'Into a constellation symbolizing
 'Only the natural, *unperverted*, bent
 'Of a *still pure* patrician sentiment ?

LI.

' But tell me, you who know it, of that sphere
 ' Wherein Glenaveril's natal planets move !
 ' Hearsay mysteriously avers that there
 ' A world exists which in a different groove
 ' From mine revolves, nor can the two cohere
 ' Or intermingle. There, they tell me "love"
 ' Is called "alliance," and Society
 ' Is shocked by all that's individual. Why ? '

LII.

' Because,' said he, ' Society, in fact,
 ' Is there, itself, an individual ;
 ' One homogeneous entity, compact,
 ' And self-consistent ; its constituents all
 ' The same in sentiment, the same in act.
 ' In that world only, a perpetual
 ' Equality presides. By wrecking it,
 ' Democracy, in her destructive fit,

LIII.

' Deems she can such equality erect,
 ' Upon its levelled ruins, in her own.'
 ' Folly !' exclaimed Cordelia, ' in a sect
 ' Whose members are but few, and all well known
 ' To one another, intercourse select
 ' Permits equality ; but there alone
 ' Where all one common standard have embraced
 ' Of principles, and sentiments, and taste ;

LIV.

'In our promiscuous world, where no man's sure
'About his neighbour's character, where each
'(By each opposed) is struggling to procure
'What all are wanting, where the strugglers reach
'Across each other, and must needs endure
'A contact with competitors who teach
'And learn reciprocal mistrust—there can
'Be no such intercourse 'twixt man and man.

LV.

'In *this* world, all things change from day to day !'
'In *that*,' said he, 'they last from age to age :
'There History, time's lame traveller, whose slow way
'Is all in little steps, at every stage
'Uncertain of her course, doth longest stay ;
'For there, to check her fitful pilgrimage,
'A Territorial Nobility
'Stands, like a mountain joining earth and sky ;

LVI.

'And each one of this mountain's many stones
'Can say "*the mountain, that is I!*" For all
'The great rock is made up of little ones,
'A multitudinous individual !
'Whole centuries of numbered names at once
'Does every child that's born to it recall ;
'In cradles, there, remembrances are rife,
'And babes begin not, but continue life !'

LVII.

‘ You see, then,’ cried Cordelia, ‘ that, between
‘ That world and mine, dissimilar sentiments,
‘ Ideas, and traditions, intervene !
‘ The People (in my land, at all events)
‘ Is Sovereign ; but in no land hath it been,
‘ Nor can it e’er be, Noble. Pure descents
‘ Do to the past perpetual tribute pay :
‘ The Kingdom of the People is To-day ;

LVIII.

‘ Its children from their birthday date their past,
‘ Which at their death they, with themselves, inter ;
‘ And, when they die, their ended lives are cast
‘ Into the great crowd’s common sepulchre ;
‘ Of their own lineage they are first and last ;
‘ Nothing do they receive, nor aught confer,
‘ By being born ; the stored results of merit
‘ Neither do they bequeath nor yet inherit.’

LIX.

‘ These views,’ said Edelrath, ‘ I cannot share !
‘ I think you wrong your own world ; for to me
‘ It seems that you, yourself, an instance are
‘ Of worth inherited ’—‘ I spoke,’ said she,
‘ Not of inherited worth, but (what’s more rare)
‘ The stored results of it, whate’er they be,
‘ Continued in one family, and passed on,
‘ Without dispersion, safe from sire to son.

LX.

‘ A pure Democracy prohibits all
‘ Prolonged accumulations ; and thereby
‘ Disintegrates that family pedestal
‘ Which forms the base of Aristocracy.
‘ In my world, with the individual
‘ All things begin and end. But think not I
‘ My world despise. Far from it ! Ne’er on earth
‘ Breathed there a woman prouder of her birth.

LXI.

‘ The People’s Child am I ! nor can I be
‘ Of any parentage above mine own
‘ Reborn. I do not wish, I would not see
‘ Without regret, Nobility o’erthrown,
‘ More than the moss beneath the forest tree
‘ Would wish the forest tree to be cut down ;
‘ Nor do I think that it should abdicate
‘ The prejudices proper to its state ;

LXII.

‘ Such self-abasement would be suicide,
‘ A thing contemptible ! The situation,
‘ However, which for Ivor and his bride
‘ Would, in that world, avenge his abdication
‘ Of all such prejudices (signified
‘ By his deliberate perpetuation
‘ Of the Glenaveril title, name, and race,
‘ Thro’ a plebeian marriage) could he face ?

LXIII.

‘ Yes, he could face it, he is brave enough !
‘ But at what cost ? A cold politeness might
‘ Disguise the natural disapproval of
‘ His equals. Scorn is painfully polite.
‘ But they would not forgive him his rebuff
‘ Of all the laws that govern and unite
‘ That world to which such marriages are treasons.
‘ And for resentment they would have good reasons ;

LXIV.

‘ Class-sentiment, the first ; the next, because,
‘ Being themselves in some respects affected
‘ Uncomfortably by the social laws
‘ Whereto their own lives still remain subjected,
‘ To see another caring not three straws
‘ For the authority of such respected
‘ And venerable institutes, would be
‘ An aggravating sight, we must agree ;

LXV.

‘ And lastly, Ivor having gone the way
‘ They would have gone, if they had dared to go,
‘ And having, to their envy and dismay,
‘ By doing what they lack the heart to do,
‘ Gained for himself a happiness which they
‘ Have known not even how to seek, altho’
‘ Blaming him rightly, they would feel, with shame,
‘ That they were wrong to envy what they blame.’

LXVI.

‘But I repeat,’ said Edelrath, ‘that now,
‘In England, the society which all
‘To be the choicest and the best, allow,
‘Is just as mixed, and just as general,
‘As any in America.’ ‘And how
‘Does this,’ she answered, ‘justify your call
‘On Ivor to uphold a cause, its own
‘Hereditary leaders thus let down?’

LXVII.

‘Tis just because of this!’ he sighed. ‘The few
‘High-minded men who still its claims revere,
‘Should to each other, all the more, be true.’
‘Yes!’ she rejoined, ‘and what concerns me here
‘Is *their* opinion. How will such men view
‘Glenaveril’s marriage? What will it appear,
‘When it is judged by those who constitute
‘The sole court competent to try this suit?’

LXVIII.

Blushing she paused, and ‘O strong friend, forgive
‘A desperate combatant, nor take amiss
‘My words,’ she said, ‘tho’ argumentative
‘And captious be their tone! Remember this,
‘The weakest little bird will fiercely strive
‘With beak and claw, and every force that is
‘By nature given her, to defend her nest;
‘And I for mine am fighting, sorely pressed!’

LXIX.

With this appeal, she laid a pleading hand
 In Edelrath's, and turned upon him eyes
 Moist with emotion. 'Nay, I understand,'
 He answered, 'and, what's more, I sympathise ;
 'Trust my unprejudiced affection, and
 'Frank as my questions were, be your replies !'
 He pressed the hand she gave him, and anon
 Cordelia, thereby reassured, went on,

LXX.

'You see, then, that by thus reëntering it
 'Glenaveril with that world of his would have
 'Completely broken. Were it not more fit
 'For him and all concerned (however brave
 'His love may be) that he should not thus pit
 'Against such odds, and in a cause so grave,
 'The happiness and dignity of life,
 'By quarrelling with the world about his wife ?

LXXI.

'I think that such a life would be a hell ;
 'And Hell's the only price that none can pay
 'For Heaven. We both of us (I know it well !)
 'Should suffer silent torments every day,
 'Not in our love, whose force such pangs would swell,
 'But, thro' our love, in the most sensitive way,
 'Each for the other's pride. Could fate worse ill
 'Inflict on Ivor, Lord Glenaveril ?

LXXII.

'Enough of him! Now for his substitute,
 'Successor, saviour, and destroyer too,
 'IVOR-EMANUEL! How will he suit
 'The nature of his new life, or his new
 'Life's nature suit his own? What sort of fruit
 'Will come of this seed's sowing? I eschew
 'No counter-proof that is available,
 'And first, who *is* this New Emanuel?

LXXIII.

'I mean, what is his nature? what the bent
 'Of its distinctive tendencies? what kind
 'Of sources or conditions of content
 'Have nourished hitherto his heart and mind?
 'What was congenial to his temperament,
 'In that great world he now must leave behind?'
 Cordelia paused again, and 'Friend, that I
 'May to your own more perfectly reply,

LXXIV.

'Suffer me now,' she said, 'to ask of *you*
 'Some questions. Well you knew Emanuel;
 'I mean the dead Emanuel Müller, who
 'Was born (as I, myself, of course know well)
 'A simple village pastor's son—trained, too,
 'From childhood, for his father's peaceable
 'And pure vocation. Tell me, if you please,
 'Was he contented? Was his mind at ease?

LXXV.

‘ Did he regret to be what he was born ?
‘ What was there in his character allied
‘ To that of either Mary Haggerdorn,
‘ Or Gottfried Müller ? Did it chafe his pride
‘ To take a gift from Ivor ? Was he torn
‘ By no desires for destinies denied ? ’
Edelrath, with a startled emphasis,
Cried, ‘ How, Cordelia, could you guess all this ?

LXXVI.

‘ Yes, it is true. Emanuel was not
‘ Happy in his own sphere. His heart was proud,
‘ His spirit high, and to his lowly lot,
‘ And peaceful calling, great, tho’ unavowed,
‘ Was his repugnance. What has all this got
‘ To do, however, when its truth’s allowed,
‘ With Ivor’s future ? ’ ‘ Stay ! ’ Cordelia cried,
‘ Why was Emanuel dissatisfied ?

LXXVII.

‘ Life does, I know, revenge itself upon
‘ The happiness of persons who neglect
‘ Its duties. Of such persons was he one ? ’
‘ No,’ replied Edelrath. ‘ Severe respect
‘ He paid to duty, and neglected none
‘ That he inherited.’ ‘ Then the defect,’
Cordelia said, ‘ which marred his happiness,
‘ Was a mistaken choice, you must confess !

LXXVIII.

'The life he led so dutifully was
 'A life ill-chosen, and its duties all
 'Unsuited to his character. Alas,
 'This, I suspect, is the most general
 '(Tho' least acknowledged) cause of life's vast mass
 'Of well-meant failures—a mistaken call!
 'And O how rarely we avoid mistake,
 'When for another's life the choice we make!

LXXIX.

'But suffer me to ask you one or two
 'More questions still. Emanuel's nature, say
 'Was it a loving one?' 'Twas not.' 'I know,'
 With sparkling eyes resumed Cordelia,
 'What Ivor's nature is! But tell me now
 'Of its relation to his past, I pray!
 'In that great world we spoke of, did he find
 'Pleasure, or charm, or even peace of mind?'

LXXX.

Edelrath sighed, 'I fear not.' 'Did he take
 'An active part in its pursuits, however?'
 'Alas, no! When I urged the boy to make
 'His maiden speech, I failed in that endeavour.'
 'But in the Landed Interest a great stake
 'Glenaveril's Earl had, surely? did he never
 'Attend to local matters—his estates,
 'Scotch, English, Quarter Sessions, roads, and rates?'

LXXXI.

'I must confess,' said Edelrath, 'that he
 'Was more indifferent, in his generous way,
 'About such matters than 'twas right to be;
 'But all details he left to Matthew Grey,
 '(His Agent, a most worthy man!) and me.'
 'If that be so,' replied Cordelia,
 'What are the duties which will be undone
 'Unless he does them? Can you name me one?

LXXXII.

'I speak not of enjoyments. 'Twould appear
 'That these he found not in that station high
 'He must relinquish, or resume, 'tis clear;
 'But what, I ask, was the activity
 'His powers put forth, the personal career,
 'The salutary forces whose employ
 'On him depended? What will cease to act,
 'If from his world his presence you subtract?

LXXXIII.

His place in Parliament remains, unhurt
 'By the withdrawal of an occupant
 'Who rarely filled it. His estates revert
 'To one whose vigilance they will not want.
 'But when I look for traces that assert
 'Such a connection 'twixt the soil and plant
 'That either of them will the other miss,
 'I find them not. And I take note of this.'

LXXXIV.

‘That may be so,’ sighed Edelrath, ‘but still—’
‘Still?’ she exclaimed, ‘but in all else I find
‘Abundant evidence Glenaveril
‘Has a rich soul, an energetic mind,
‘A glowing heart! And, answer how you will
‘This question, long ago its answer shined
‘In on mine own heart like a flash of light
‘From heaven, illumining a starless night—

LXXXV.

‘Why was it that my letter at a glance
‘Was understood by Ivor, only sneered
‘And laughed at by Emanuel? Was that chance?
‘Why was it that its record so endeared
‘To Ivor’s fancy every circumstance
‘Whereby Emanuel’s parentage appeared
‘In a new light to him, and strangely thrown
‘Into a sweet connection with my own?’

LXXXVI.

‘I say, it was because he is the true
‘Emanuel, and not the man that’s dead!,
Edelrath started wistfully, and threw
Upon Cordelia a look which said,
‘What can you mean?’ ‘I mean,’ she said, ‘that you,
‘If you approach the question by the aid
‘Of all these facts, will own that Nature meant
‘Ivor to be what some strange accident

LXXXVII.

' Of circumstance prevented for a while :
 ' That hindrance gone, he now regains the right
 ' To be what—he has always been ! You smile ?
 ' Ah, how explain ? What causes our delight
 ' In Art's supreme achievements ? the skilled style ?
 ' No, but the truth (else hidden from our sight)
 ' Which Art reveals to us when she reflects
 ' What Nature meant, redeemed from all defects ;

LXXXVIII.

' Defects which chance or accident create
 ' By interference with the working out
 ' Of Nature's Will. But Art, the most ornate,
 ' Would, lacking Sentiment, be flesh without
 ' A soul ; and Sentiment, whose truth puts straight
 ' What Circumstance perverts, here brings about
 ' Nature's recovery of her own true son,
 ' Thro' the World's loss of its adopted one !

LXXXIX.

' So, too, tho' in the unfolding of my love
 ' The real took at last the ideal's place,
 ' Both loves, combined in Ivor's image, prove
 ' Each love the same ; since each its source can trace
 ' To the intention of a Power above
 ' The reach of accident. In Ivor's case,
 ' Tho' Chance misnamed, yet its defeated spell
 ' Could not disguise, the True Emanuel.

XC.

'The Nominal Emanuel was the son
'Of Nature's usurpation by some still
'Unknown mistake. I leave him, and pass on.
'My Ungleneverilled Glenaveril,
'Into the True Emanuel anon
'By True Love's magic metamorphosed, will
'One false position lose. But this alone
'Secures him not against another one ;

XCI.

'That's to consider now. And here, I say
'At once that of the loss of wealth I think
'More seriously than probably you may
'Imagine from the fact I did not shrink,
'When Ivor summoned me to throw away
'Mine own, for fear its weight should snap the link
'Between our lives. I'm not indifferent
'To all the charms wealth does, no doubt, present ;

XCII.

'They are delightful. I enjoy them. Wealth
'Is to our moral, what the soft warm air
'Of this sweet South is to our physical, health ;
'Pleasant, but enervating. In its fair
'And soothing clime, that puts to sleep by stealth,
'One after one within their languid lair,
'Our unused energies, the artistic sense
'Expands and flourishes at their expense.

XCIII.

‘ Round every human being seems to lie
‘ A world of things good and enjoyable ;
‘ But only such good things can each enjoy
‘ As are to his own nature suited well ;
‘ And, to enjoy them, he must willingly
‘ The rest renounce. Capacity to tell
‘ What such things are, I take to be the best
‘ Gift of self-knowledge, and its surest test.

XCIV.

‘ I do not think that Ivor has enjoyed
‘ The wealth he is about to part with now.
‘ His manlier faculties, long unemployed
‘ In its soft atmosphere, will doubtless grow
‘ Stronger in that hard air, which, tho’ devoid
‘ Of sensuous charm, keen relish can bestow
‘ Upon the well-used gifts of youth and health.
‘ I never once have missed my own lost wealth ;

XCV.

‘ Its unrepented sacrifice, however
‘ Was not Glenaveril’s own requirement. He
‘ Would, in Emanuel’s place, I think, have never
‘ Conceived that thought, which at his age could be
‘ Natural only when the harsh endeavour
‘ To reconcile those foes who ne’er agree
‘ About their victim, Poverty and Pride,
‘ The sap of youth’s spontaneous trust has dried.

XCVI.

‘ A man of birth, who happens to be poor,
‘ May well accept a fortune from his wife,
‘ I fancy, and his self-respect endure
‘ No loss thereby, if in his sphere of life
‘ Wealth’s absence be an accident; but sure
‘ Am I, that he whose pride, exempt from strife
‘ For recognition, can thus act, his class
‘ Must rank by what he *is*, not what he *has*,

XCVII.

‘ Such things, a proud plebeian cannot do ;
‘ Without, at least, appearing to deny
‘ The filial reverence from their children due
‘ To those stern parents, Toil and Poverty :
‘ The lordship, which he lacks abroad, is so
‘ Essential to him in his home, that, by
‘ Subjecting this to the last compromise,
‘ He loses dignity in his own eyes.

XCVIII.

‘ In classes, as in races too, you get
‘ Generic characters ; that’s why I read
‘ Without surprise a postscript which I set
‘ Down to Emanuel, and interpreted
‘ By these reflections. What an *oubliette*
‘ A postscript is ! Women, I know, are said
‘ To thrust herein, as things forgotten quite,
‘ The most important parts of what they write.

XCIX.

' Well, it was just this little feminine touch
 ' That charmed me ! Its avowed forgetfulness
 ' Of the extreme severity of such
 ' A first condition pleased me, I confess,
 ' By quietly restoring to it much
 ' Of what was taken from it by the stress
 ' Of its harsh terms—I mean, that tender grace
 ' Which all throughout the letter I could trace.

C.

' Still, Ivor was the means of stripping me
 ' Of all my fortune : but the crime, I own, is
 ' Atoned for by the manner in which he
 ' Interprets now the stern *lex talionis*.
 ' To indemnify my sacrifice would be
 ' A vulgar act (indemnity alone is
 ' No real redress of injury or crime)
 ' But O, to imitate it, is sublime !

CI.

' Was it not Alexander who is said,
 ' When thirsting, to have thrown away the drink
 ' Of water which he might have shared instead
 ' With him who offered all of it ? I think
 ' That sacrifice can only be repaid
 ' By sacrifice. Such payment is a link
 ' That heart to heart makes fast for ever, leaving
 ' No difference between giving and receiving.

CII.

' Now for the Future ! 'Tis a land unknown,
 ' And who can think of it quite free from qualms ?
 ' But Youth and Love with cohorts of their own
 ' Approach it, not as beggars asking alms,
 ' But bold invaders come to claim its crown,
 ' And pitch their conquering tents beneath its
 palms.
 ' And, tho' I gave (Love's bidding to obey)
 ' Mine unmissed wealth, without reserve, away,

CIII.

' Life's choicest treasure, when that wealth was gone,
 ' Still mine remained. A story once I read,
 ' Of that heroic Prince of Macedon
 ' Who, when he had his lands distributed
 ' Amongst his comrades, for himself alone
 ' One kingdom kept ; its name was HOPE, he said ;
 ' So I. My good old Guardian nods and winks
 ' Brimful of schemes, by me unguessed, he thinks ;

CIV.

' But I divine them, and believe the plan
 ' Concocted for Emanuel's benefit,
 ' And mine, by our benevolent Jonathan
 ' (Whatever else may some day come of it)
 ' Is, on the whole, the best that Ivor can
 ' First follow. Its adoption may permit
 ' Love to regain in time, what Pride at random,
 ' Renounced in haste. *Quod erat demonstrandum !*'

CV.

Cried Edelrath, and stretched his hands to seize
 Cordelia's, with a glowing approbation.
 ' *Quod erat demonstrandum!* you must please
 ' To pardon my scholastic observation,
 ' Which means, my dear, that '—' I'm no Heloïse,
 ' But I can understand without translation,'
 Cordelia laughed, ' another little bit
 ' Of Latin which I much prefer to it.'

CVI.

' Latin!' said he, ' Well, you may knock me down
 ' With *Cicero de Officiis*, if you will!
 ' But I declare, Cordelia, your own
 ' Philosophy's as good, and better still.'
 ' No,' she replied, ' the only Latin known
 ' To me, is this—I shall pronounce it ill,
 ' And that, your ear must not be too much hurt at;
 ' But here it is—*QUOD DEUS BENE VERTAT!*'

CVII.

Glenaveril, just in time to catch that word,
 Here entered, all his face suffused with bliss.
 ' *QUOD DEUS BENE VERTAT!* thou hast heard?'
 Cried Edelrath, ' let thy device be this
 ' Henceforth, dear Ivor, and the one conferred
 ' Upon thee by thy birth we shall not miss.
 ' Come, then, and from the sweet lips of thy wife
 ' Receive the watchword of thy future life!'

CVIII.

So saying, in the young man's arms he placed
 Cordelia, who her own round Ivor threw.
 Glenaveril stooped, and tenderly embraced
 The lips no more denied him. In the New
 Emanuel the Old Ivor seemed effaced
 Miraculously, all at once. He drew
 His head up proudly, and upon his brow
 The eyes of Edelrath detected now

CIX.

Serene self-confidence, not there before.
 A marvellous metamorphosis was wrought
 In these two men. The old man half a score
 Of years had lost, or so you would have thought
 From the alert, brisk, look his features wore;
 Whilst to the young man's mien the change had
 brought
 As many years of added manliness.
 'No!' he exclaimed, 'for Heaven, I know, will bless,

CX.

'Without a Latin invocation now,
 'The future it, with her, hath given me! No,
 'I know a motto you must both allow
 'To be a more becoming one; and so
 'I mean to make it mine, and mean to vow
 'And swear by it, and never to let go
 'The faith I have in it!' 'What's that?' said she,
 And 'CE QUE FEMME VEUT DIEU LE VEUT!' said he.

CANTO IV.

DAWN.

I.

THE night was far spent when, at last alone,
O'er all the strange results of his long quest,
And all that he that day had undergone,
Edelrath (far too tired to sleep or rest)
Mused in his silent chamber. There was one,
And one doubt only, lingering in his breast ;
But round it, rousing and yet soothing him,
Streamed restless swarms of recollections dim.

II.

Often and often, in the years gone by,
That doubt had flitted thro' his mind, tho' there
It then could rest not, for instinctively
His will had combated the vain despair
Its coming carried with it. But a high
And solemn comfort now, on wings as fair
As those of Faith, to many a mournful thought,
And many a sorrowing memory, it brought.

III.

The old man to the window turned, undid
The casement, on the balcony stepped out,
And leaned above the balustrade. There slid
A low, uncertain, shuddering sound about
The black trees, as beneath night's coverlid
Earth in light slumber stirred; and, like a doubt
That strengthens to conviction, everywhere
Dawn's influence hovered on the sensitive air;

IV.

An influence rather felt than seen; for still
The land lay dark, albeit a sallow light
Was simmering in the starless heavens, and hill,
And tower, and tree grew slowly into sight,
Spotting the grey. '*Who was Glenaveril?*'
This question on the Scholar's mind that night
Had taken hold; and now, no more afraid
Of prompt dismissal, for its answer staid.

V.

'*Who was Glenaveril?*' A question thou,
Sagacious student of this ended tale,
Hast, doubtless, often asked thyself ere now,
Or him that tells it, asked. Without avail!
Since how to answer it, he doth not know;
And, did he try to answer, he would fail
Both in discretion and trustworthiness,
Knowing no more than thou; nay, even less!

VI.

For thou, who readest what he writes, hast found
Among these pages (so he trusts, at least)
Much more than he himself is either bound
To find, or fit to seek. In his own breast
He keeps no truth untold, no clue unwound,
No scrap of revelation unreleased ;
All that to him was given, he gives to thee,
And more he cannot. But he is not free ;

VII.

He may not pause, as thou dost, here and there,
From page to page, with penetrative eyes,
To search out truth, or error ; nor compare
This point with that, and probe, and analyse,
And draw conclusions. In oracular air
A Presence, that admits of no replies
To its commands, stands o'er him, when the nights
Are wistful, and the morns aware. He writes

VIII.

As some unseen dictatress (who but stays
Till all is said, impatient to be gone)
Her strong injunction on his spirit lays :
What she reveals not, is to him unknown,
And only what she bids him say, he says.
Nought may he add thereto, that is his own ;
Nor stop, as he delivers them, to guess
The sense of her imperious messages.

IX.

But all the images thou dost behold
 Reflected here, whate'er they seem to be,
 Are Life's reflections. And Life leaves untold
 The greater part of all she does : for she,
 Ever propounding problems manifold,
 Keeps in her own unopened hand their key.
 Even Law, herself, declines the impossible task
 Of answering the question thou wouldst ask ;

X.

Declaring prudently that '*Pater est
 Quem justæ nuptiæ denunciant.*'
 Then how imprudent were it to suggest,
 Without the least authority, a want
 Of confidence in what was deemed the best
 Conclusion on a case, which we must grant
 Suggestive of a substitution heinous,
 By wise Justinian and Trebonianus !

XI.

If, on the birthday which with one another
 Emanuel and Ivor shared, 'twas so
 Contrived by Chance that on each foster-brother
 Life did her gifts mistakenly bestow,
 Giving to each the father and the mother
 That to the other one belonged,—altho'
 Both Life and Death the unconscious fraud concealed,
 Nature the wrong thus done her had revealed.

XII.

And *if* that substitution *did* take place,
'Twould justify Cordelia's faith in love
Predestined : a supposititious case,
However, which there are no means to prove.
Of such a change, if it occurred, no trace
Survived its swift occurrence, save what strove
For recognition in the character
Of the two changelings—changelings if they were.

XIII.

Think what thou wilt, then, Reader ! For my part,
There is no theory about love, I care
To prove, or disprove. Theories we may start
As many as we please, the wear and tear
Of practice spoils them all. The human heart
Is not consistent, as our theories are
About it. It admits them every one
Without distinction, but it follows none.

XIV.

If thou art superstitious, thou may'st find
A moral here that will support, perchance,
A superstition softening to thy mind
The harshness of untoward circumstance :
If to be sceptical thou art inclined,
Nothing compels thee to give countenance
To such a fanciful elucidation
Of an imaginary complication.

XV.

All that I know, and all that I can tell,
Is that to Edelrath—as there he stood,
In dawn's dim air, beneath the two-fold spell
Of night and morning—it seemed sweet and good
To think that Ivor and Emanuel,
Not by chance only, but by birth and blood,
Possessed the names which now at last they bore;
Regaining thus what they could lose no more.

XVI.

The chance direction of a word, thrown out
That evening by Cordelia, had at first
Revived this faint, and oft rejected, doubt ;
Which, since, by memory and reflection nursed
To fond conviction, now diffused about
The old man's mind a creeping light, that burst,
Like an unclouded sunrise, clear at last
O'er the undarkening problems of the past.

XVII.

The boys, he knew, had on the self-same day
Begun the fatal malady of life,
Together, in a house where doubt, dismay,
Terror, confusion, and distress were rife :
And he had heard the vexed physician say,
With self-reproaches, that the peasant's wife,
Who had not bargained for two babes to nurse,
Was frightened, foolish, peevish, and perverse.

XVIII.

What less unlikely, than that she had been
 The unconscious cause of all that contradiction,
 Which afterwards revealed itself between
 Their fates and characters? In this conviction
 Edelrath, with a pity more serene
 And less perplexed, recalled each predilection
 That in his pupils, growing with their growth,
 So oft had pained him on behalf of both.

XIX.

Cordelia's cry of triumph echoed thro'
 The recollections which it comforted,
 And he, too, murmured '*Ivor is the true*
 '*Emanuel, and not the man that's dead!*'
 Wondrous it seemed to him, and lovely too,
 That a discovery, which his own wise head
 Had missed for years, should, without help received
 From aught save love, have been by her achieved;

XX.

Achieved, too, with no knowledge on her part
 Of its achievement! For the girl was still
 Unconscious that the inference of her heart
 About Emanuel and Glenaveril
 (Just as the instinctive truth of Tragic Art
 Sometimes anticipates the historian's skill)
 Could claim, from actual fact, corroboration
 Of the correctness of its divination.

XXI.

The curse of the Glenaverils—violent death,
Seemed, by its last fulfilment, to attest
The dead man's right to that proud tomb, beneath
Whose pompous record now was laid to rest
The embittered life that, from its earliest breath
To its last groan, had never once possessed
Aught by that tomb's unconscious truth proclaimed
As his who there alone was rightly named.

XXII.

And this thought reconciled the old man's sense
Of justice, without further protestation,
To what it had till then with violence
Resisted—the spontaneous resignation
By Ivor of that heritage immense,
Which was but an unnatural usurpation,
If his hypothesis were once admitted—
That Accident had Nature's will outwitted.

XXIII.

So, on the past peace rested in his mind,
And on the future, promise. That device
Of Ivor's fancy, with its undesigned
Effect, seemed now no more a mere caprice,
But a blest inspiration. Thus resigned
To Emanuel's death, and Ivor's sacrifice,
Edelrath raised to heaven his looks. And lo,
The rosy mountain-tops were all aglow !

XXIV.

Over the cold, steel-coloured, lake still hung
White lingering vapours. Night had rallied there
Her routed darknesses ; which faintly clung
About the low shores, seeking their last lair
Under the vast and solemn shadows flung
From shining summits in a golden air ;
And there, as if dawn took them by surprise,
A few faint lamps still winked their drowsy eyes ;

XXV.

But, near the horizon, streaked with daffodil,
The waters gleamed. And ever and anon
Up from the little town below the hill
Came sounds of life : the cock's alarum lone,
The chime of matin bells, and, made more shrill
By intervening silence, the sharp tone
Of some dog's wandering bark, or boatman's shout,
From quays whence market-boats were putting out ;

XXVI.

High up in heaven, a realm of radiant snow
And gorgeous colour, with surprises swift
Thro' solemn transformations passing now,
In spacious pageantry began to lift
Its sunrise-coronalled capacious brow,
And over its mysterious shoulders shift
A mantle vast of ever-varying hue,
Purple, and crimson, and aërial blue.

XXVII.

Uplifted by the exhilarating sight,
As on these splendid summits dipped in day
Edelrath gazed, he felt his soul grow light
And buoyant. Underneath and round him, lay
A lower land, of wooded slopes, and slight
Acclivities, and streams whose sparkling way
Flashed in the sunrise here and there, and made
A rambling light through depths of dewy shade ;

XXVIII.

Not far away, above that roadside wall,
All gapped, and broken, and with weeds o'ergrown,
Where he had sat with Ivor, rose a small,
Smooth, shrubless hill ; whose bare unbroken crown
Against the amber-lighted welkin, all
Steeped in the steadfast darkness of its own
Broad shadow (still impervious to the smile
Of the slow sunrise) stamped its black profile ;

XXIX.

And on its edge (distinct against the sun)
Stood two young human figures, hand in hand,
Gazing into the glory ; which anon,
From peak to peak, down all the lower land
Poured its blithe triumph, revelling on, and on,
And taking irresistible command
Of heaven and earth. They, like himself, no doubt,
To end a sleepless night had wandered out ;

XXX.

Restless with happiness ; and knowing, too,
That dreams, the sweetest, could but imitate
The real, waking, sweetness of the true
Elysium they had found. At length, elate,
The invincible sunrise stormed and overthrew
The darkness camped there. All in glittering state,
Its golden spears, and rosy pennons, gleamed
Across the ridge, and down the hillside streamed ;

XXXI.

And, for a moment, while with pensive gaze
He watched them, those two forms were lost to sight,
Merged in a rich translucency of rays
That splendidly enwrapped them with the light
Of the first day of a new life ; whose days,
The old man felt, must be in all things quite
Unlike the days that were. He knew that he
His children's Canaan should, like Moses, see

XXXII.

Only far off, nor ever enter it.
To earth no portion in the Promised Land
Of his own pilgrimage did Heaven permit.
On this lone Pisgah he laid down his wand.
Meanwhile, emerging from the glow that lit
Her image still, Cordelia, hand in hand
With Ivor, turned ; and, lingeringly, they
Along the purple upland passed away.

THE END.

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